Mrs A Van Batten Me

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XXVIII. ROBERT BONNER, {COR. OF WILLIAM AND SPRUCE STS. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1872. TERMS. {$3 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 38.

THEN, AS NOW.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

Then, as now, the woodlands were reddening,
  As the blast of Autumn blew;
Then, as now, the chestnuts were dropping,
  And rustling the dead leaves through.
Then, as now, when we drove together
  O'er the stony Maryland road,
While the love in our wildly beating hearts
  Like the tints of the woodlands glowed.

There over the stubbles still swiftly
  The partridge goes skurrying free,
And, as then, I hear from the pine grove
  A woodpecker pounding a tree.
Each sight and each sound recalls sadly
  That happy, but sad, sweet hour;
For our talk was of parting, as well as love—
  Of a passion beyond our power.

There brawls the shallow streamlet
  Below the murmuring mill,
Where we paused in the middle, and listened,
  As our thirsty steed stood still.
And she said she cared not if the brooklet
  Should become a wild torrent-wave,
So that, folded fast in a last embrace,
  We should find in its depths one grave.

For circumstance drew the barrier
  Of varying fortunes and ends,
And ever the gulf was widening
  That parted us, leaving us—friends.
And we parted—as in all honor—
  With one last pure kiss in the dells.
Ah! I wonder if she remembers it,
  In the palace wherein she dwells?

For there, with her lord, she queens it
  With a regal grace, they say.
Perhaps 'tis a gilded lie she acts,
  To cheat the past away.
No matter: to me it ever comes back
  When the woodlands are golden and red;
Though it comes with a moaning and sad unrest,
  Like the ghost of a love that is dead.

◆

KATE ARLINGTON;

OR,

The Buccaneer's Bridal.

A STORY OF SHIP AND SHORE.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

CHAPTER X.

THE STONE HOUSE AND ITS WARDERS.

It was near the middle of the forenoon when the *Adder* reached the sheltered nook of the Green Island, and as soon as the chief had seen all safe and snug, and the lofty spars lowered, he ordered his boat to be in readiness at the gangway. Then he entered the cabin, where he found his captive evidently expecting him. Friday was also there, and had been busy in packing a case of wine which his master had ordered.

"Take the case to the boat," said Dixon, "and then come back."

The negro shouldered the hamper, and mounted the ladder, and when he was gone the chief turned to Kate. If there was any eagerness in his bosom, he did not show it; but the smile upon his face was too superficial to escape detection. The smile was not in his heart.

"Miss Arlington," he said, "I have, as you have probably anticipated, arranged to give you a bit of fresh air upon shore. I want you to see what an elysium we have in this far-away nook. I think some kind spirit must have reserved it especially for our benefit."

"Are we to return to the vessel?" Kate asked, without betraying emotion.

"At some time—yes," replied Dixon, with a slight hesitation. "You will be as safe on shore as here."

"I only asked that I might know how to prepare."

"You need borrow no trouble about preparation, my dear girl. Our servants will attend to that. You will find service from your own sex on the island."

"Do we start soon?"

"As soon as Friday comes back to get your wardrobe.—Ah,—here he is.—You may go and make ready."

Kate retired to her state-room, and her first care, upon assuring herself that she was unobserved, was to secure other articles than her clothing. This done, she donned her hat and mantle, and soon rejoined Dixon. Friday was sent on in advance with such articles as had been selected for transportation to the shore, and the chief followed with Kate upon his arm.

Kate saw Tom Gaston as she came down the quarter-deck, and she marked his look of agony, and heard his cry of alarm. All she could do was, to show by her bearing that she was not faint nor frightened. Her step was firm, and her look was that of one who has confidence in self and in right. If Gaston did not catch the signal, his companion did, as Kate quickly observed. She descended to the boat, and was pulled to the shore, where a landing of coral rocks had been built out from the gently sloping beach.

It was truly a beautiful spot. A light, sandy soil, enriched by the deposits of a former age, and watered by numerous springs of pure fresh water, gave growth to a luxuriant covering of grass, shrub, and tree. A grove of palms grew near to the water's edge, and passing this Kate found oranges and lemons and limes in profusion. Upon the highest portion of the island were several stately mahogany trees, with many of their rich, lilac-like flowering spikes still blooming. Several huts, built of mahogany logs, and thatched with palm, stood amid the orange groves upon the eastern slope, and farther up was a more pretentious building of stone. As Kate drew near to this latter structure she saw that the walls were thick and strong, and that it occupied much space upon the ground; and as she came to the grassy slope in front of the house she saw one other thing to which Dixon called her attention.

"From this point," said he, sweeping his hand as he spoke, "you can see the whole extent of our territory. We deem it a vast amount of beauty in a very small compass. What say you?"

Kate looked, and beheld the water upon both hands. The island was not more than a mile long by half a mile wide, and on three sides the seemingly boundless stretch of calcareous rocks and coral reefs, washed by the surging sea, broke in close upon the shore of the green isle.

"It is certainly a pleasant spot to the eye," she said, absently. She was looking off upon the brig, which could be seen through a vista of the orange trees, as she spoke.

"And you can make it a pleasant spot in every way, if you choose," returned the chieftain, with another of his superficial smiles.

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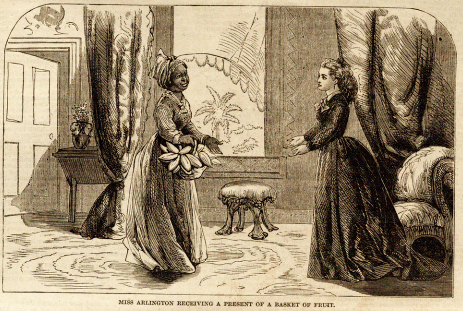

MISS ARLINGTON RECEIVING A PRESENT OF A BASKET OF FRUIT.

Kate did not reply to this, for at that moment her attention was attracted by a pair of human beings who had just come out from the stone building. She had seen several negroes upon the island, but here were two worthy of especial notice; and she noticed them the more particularly because she believed, the moment she beheld them, that they were to have much to do with her fate in that place.

Foremost was a woman, of large, powerful frame, and with that cut of features, and length and quality of hair which betoken the admixture of Indian blood. And her face had the hard, Indian look, with the cold, keen eyes, the prominent cheek-bones, and the outstanding nose. Yet she was black, and the negro clearly predominated. In years she was sixty, though she did not look it. Her immense physical powers had held their own wonderfully, and there was not a bend in her frame to indicate that the weight of years was upon her.

The second of the twain—second because he came out after the woman—was a man, black as night, and of gigantic proportions. He was at least seven feet high, with broad, sloping shoulders, full breast, and massive limbs. He was a native African—an Ashantee—and had been brought from the slave coast when a mere child. He was older than the woman, being five-and-sixty,—but so far as his bodily powers were concerned, he had not passed his prime.

The man was called Moses, and the woman answered to the name of Hagar; and they had come to the island with the Spanish buccaneer Ribera more than forty years before, and by Ribera they had been installed as custodians and wardens of the island retreat, and Ribera's successors had been glad to retain them in the office. They had been held as slaves until Barker Dixon had come to the command; but Dixon, recognizing the spirit that was in them, gave them their freedom, and secured the deed by written contract signed by all his officers. The result had not disappointed him. Being free, they found pride in acting their own pleasure; and their greatest pleasure was, to serve the man who had so ennobled them. The other negroes on the island were slaves, and Moses and Hagar were proud in their mastership over them.

"Cap'n Dixon," said Hagar, with an odd mixture of grandness and subserviency in her manner, "we 's glad to see ye back."

"And I am glad to see you looking so well, Hagar," returned the chief, offering his hand, which the woman took eagerly.

"And you, Moses,—I declare, you are growing young."

The Ashantee smiled a grim, satisfied smile, and took the Captain's hand in turn.

"I's a free man, Cap'n, an' dat makes me like a new man; an' ob course, a new man must be young."

And he chuckled at his wit, and then straightened himself up and looked grand with the philosophy of the thing.

"Is the house in order, Moses?"

"Eb'ry t'ing is all ship-shape an' complete, Cap'n. Will ye come in?"

"Yes;—and you may send one of your boys—or two of them—down to the boat to help Friday bring up the luggage. Hagar will show us in."

If Kate had hoped that she might find sympathy and succor at the hands of Dixon's servants upon the island, she could not look for it here. When she saw these cyclopean warders, and knew that they were to be the custodians of her fate, her heart almost failed her. Yet she did not betray fear. If she felt a tremulousness within, it was not visible without.

"This," said Dixon, presenting her to the negress, "is Hagar. She will be very kind to you for my sake.—Hagar, this is Kate Arlington, who is very near and dear to me. You will take good care of her, I know."

"I think we shall get along very well together," said Kate, taking the woman's hand without betraying a shudder.

"Ob course we shall," responded Hagar; and for an instant her features really softened as she gazed into the clear blue eyes and upon the fair face of her new charge. Then she dropped the girl's hand, and led the way into the house.

The hall was long and narrow, with doors upon either hand, but the guide kept on to the extreme end, where a door opened into a second hall which ran at right angles with the first. Here they turned to the right, and shortly afterward to the left. This brought them to a small ante-room, and still to their left was another door which opened to a large square apartment, upon the floor of which was a carpet of the richest Persian fabric, and the walls hung with pale green tapestry wrought with flowers of gold. There was one window, of goodly size, with glazed casements, looking out into an orange grove; and Kate saw that the grove was surrounded by a high wall. The furniture of the apartment was regal. There were chairs and divans of the most costly woods and elaborate workmanship, upholstered in velvet and gold, and otherwise ornamented. Lamps and flagons and vases of gold were upon the heavy sideboard; and costly pictures, in heavy gilt frames, were hung in festoons of the rich tapestry of the walls.

Kate could readily conceive that the buccaneers had levied upon the ships of all nations in the furnishing of their island palace, and a love of splendor, such as even a savage may feel, had guided them in its adornment.

"While we are engaged in discovery," said Dixon, with a smile, "I may as well show you other apartments which will be exclusively your own for the present. This is your dressing-room."

And he threw open a door to the right, exposing a small apartment, back of the ante-room by which they had entered, where were conveniences for bathing and toilet. Then he stepped over and opened a door upon the opposite side, showing a sleeping apartment, of fair dimensions, and furnished with a degree of barbaric splendor equal to the drawing-room.

"I think," he added, after he had exhibited the premises, "you will be comfortable here. You certainly may be so if you will."

Kate made no reply, and presently Dixon informed Hagar that she might go and prepare dinner. When they had been left alone the chief addressed his captive again:

"Do you think you can be comfortable here?"

Kate seated herself upon an ottoman, and in calm, measured tones replied,—

"If physical comfort were alone concerned, my answer might be prompt and unequivocal; but unfortunately such is not the case. You would not be comfortable if you were in a perplexing state of anxiety and suspense."

"Indeed, my dear girl," cried the pirate, frankly, "I have no thought or desire to keep you in suspense. Tell me how I can relieve you, and it shall be done."

"Will you tell me exactly what you intend to do with me from this time?"

"I have told you already. I mean to make you my wife."

"But how?—When?"

"Do not think, Miss Kate, that I contemplate any deception or sleight of hand in this matter. The very necessities of the situation require that I should proceed legally. Though I might gain possession of your own sweet self without the let or hindrance of legal form, that would not give me possession of your fortune; and your fortune I am determined to have. I shall bring a priest at the earliest possible moment, and our marriage shall be solemnized after the most orthodox form."

"Have you a priest upon the island?"

"Not such as the law would be willing to recognize. But there is one not far away. In Isabelique, on the coast of San Domingo, only little more than a hundred miles distant, lives a holy father who will serve us. I shall send and bring him."

A little silence followed, and then the chieftain added:

"You see, Kate, I am frank and above-board. Have you more questions that you would like to ask?"

"As I have already intimated," Kate answered, after a brief consideration, "suspense is worse than a knowledge of evil. I would be prepared for whatever is to come. How long before your priest will be here?"

"That depends upon circumstances. I shall send for him at once. Our pinnace can make the passage in a few days. Let us say that a week may elapse before the ceremony can be performed."

"Will Friday serve me here as he did on board the brig?"

The question was an unfortunate one; and for the first time Dixon's face flashed out his true feeling.

"No!" he thundered, without stopping to consider. "Friday will NOT serve you. Did you think I was blind in my own cabin? Did you think I had so little sense as to have those tricks going on under my very eyes, and I not see them? But," he went on, cooling down, and calling a grim smile to his face, "I cared not, since I held the power in my own hands all the time. No harm has been done, and I have no blame for you. Nor have I blame for Friday. He is a weak-headed old rascal, and is tender-hearted. I knew him well before I suffered him to wait upon you; and, knowing him, I kept an eye upon him. But, my dear girl, you will find the people here different. Moses and Hagar will serve you well, and will strive with all their power to promote your comfort in all proper ways; but if you think to approach them with temptation to be false to me, you will sadly mistake. In fact, you can make enemies of them by offering them the price of treachery. Let me advise you not to attempt it."

Kate betrayed the first real sign of alarm that had escaped her since leaving the vessel; but she did not quite faint. She bowed her head, and folded her hands upon her lap; and so she remained until Hagar came in and announced that refreshment had been prepared.

"You may serve it here," Dixon told her.

Hagar drew out an ebony table, inlaid with gold and silver and mother-of-pearl, and then she went away, and brought in a silver salver loaded with provisions.

Kate partook, but without an appetite. When she found the gaze of the buccaneer fixed upon her she shrunk and cowered as she had not done before, and seemed far more ill at ease than she had ever shown on board the brig. If Dixon observed this, he did not speak of it. He ate and drank, and then arose from the table.

"Now," said he, taking his hat from the sideboard, "I must leave you with those who will serve you well. Every wish not conflicting with the object of your sojourn here will be promptly gratified. Be not afraid to speak your wants. Have you anything to say—anything to ask—before I go?"

"You say you have been frank," said Kate, with something of the old firmness, "and I may be frank also. It is well known to you that Doctor Gaston is my friend—that there had been planned a nearer relationship between us than that now existing,—and you will not expect that my friendship for him can die out."

Dixon nodded, and said he did not expect any such thing. She might speak all she had to say in that direction without fear.

"I would ask," pursued Kate, "what is to be done with Thomas Gaston while I am held in durance here?"

"You put it strong, Miss Arlington. But you can call it durance if you like."

"Call it what you please," retorted the captive, with a curl of the finely moulded lip that gave token of a wondrous reserve of inner strength. "We will not bandy words upon form. Will you inform me of your intentions concerning Mr. Gaston?"

"My dear lady, I mean him well, and only well. For the present he has patients upon his hands for whom he must care. I cannot spare him until they are cured. You will have become my wife by that time, and after that he shall be his own master, to return home at pleasure."

"Will he be permitted to see me here?"

"Most decidedly—*not*."

"He will remain on board the brig?"

"Yes. The brig will not go to sea again until I am ready to go in her; and I shall not be ready to go until I have a wife."

"Barker Dixon, answer me one more question: When I am your wife—if such a thing can be permitted by the good God—how will you dare to present yourself in Boston for my fortune?"

The pirate smiled a dark, grim smile.

"I shall go to your father," he said, "and show to him, by proof which he cannot doubt, that the life of his child depends upon my safety. I will show to him that if harm comes to me through the raising of a finger on his part, the steel will enter the heart of his daughter! Remember—I know him. While I hold his child in my hands, I hold the key to his heart and his will. Do you understand?"

"I understand!" said the captive; and with an expression of deep loathing and disgust upon her fair face, and with a shudder which she could not repress, she turned away.

And so the pirate chieftain left her.

CHAPTER XI.

LEAH.

The captive did not remain long in her despondent position after Dixon had left. She lifted her head, and looked around, and then she went to the window, from which she was able to discover that the garden without was small, and that the wall which inclosed it was high and strong—a wall which could not be scaled without artificial help. Still, the wall was not an insuperable barrier. Kate said to herself, as she examined it, that it offered little real hindrance to a persevering prisoner. The sure barrier was beyond. A prisoner might climb the wall every night in the year, and yet not be able to leave the island. There could be no escape without a boat and a pilot; and where could these be found? Even should the boat be gained, where could the pilot be found able and willing to guide it through the labyrinthine pass of the coral reefs?

From the window Kate went to the wash-room, but found no means of exit thence save by the way of entrance. There was a window, but it was only a loop-hole, not wide enough for the passage of a grown person. Next she visited the sleeping room. Here, likewise, was a narrow, glazed aperture, but no means of passage further. The apartment was furnished in a princely manner, with a magnificent painting of the Crucifixion upon the wall, and a silver crucifix, upon a bracket of ebony, directly beneath it. The bed was an elaborate affair, of French manufacture, with a counterpane of wrought silk. But the captive had no admiration for this regal display. She only wondered, as she gazed, who had been robbed that the pirate's lair might be thus supplied.

By and by Hagar came in to remove the tray, and Kate observed her narrowly. The beldam cast a sweeping glance around as she entered, seeming to dwell no longer, nor more critically, upon the prisoner than upon her surroundings; and yet from that glance she evidently gained all the information she sought. With deliberate motion she moved the table back to its place, and gathered the dishes into the tray.

Surely there could be no spark of humanity in the composition of that woman which might be wrought into effective compassion to the detriment of the interests of the master whom she served. As she now busied herself with the dishes and the furniture her look was simply stolid; but there had been gleams of the brown eyes, and gleams shooting athwart the brown features, which were very far from being indications of native stolidity. Her frame, for a woman, was remarkable. Not only was it masculine in mould, but it was strong and massive even for masculinity. By the side of the Cyclop Moses she offered a slight feminine contrast; but in comparison with any man of the pirate crew she was physically immense.

As the woman was upon the point of taking up the tray for departure, Kate spoke:

"Hagar, if I understand matters rightly, I am likely to remain here some time?"

The mongrel looked up, and nodded; and her repelling look seemed to say that she was not to be questioned. But Kate was not to be easily put off. She accepted the nod as an affirmation, and proceeded,—

"Captain Dixon tells me that I am to be made comfortable. In the first place, I would know if you are to attend upon me."

Hagar nodded again, and presently, as though she had reasoned that the speech could do no harm, she said,—

"I do all you want done."

"Will any one else wait upon me?"

"Why you ask?"

"Because I would have you bid them be kind to me."

The woman gazed sharply into the captive's face, and the stolid look vanished from her strongly marked features as she did so, and a look took its place which said very plainly that she was not to be tampered with.—She touched her finger upon her bosom and said,—

"I take care of you. If my girl come, she come for me, and do what I tell her. I make you comfortable."

"Then," pursued Kate, with a smile of approval, "we ought to understand one another. You may rest assured, Hagar, that I do not propose to make myself uncomfortable, if I can help it. Even allowing that I wished to make my escape from this place, I see very plainly that the thing is simply impossible. And, allowing that I would thwart the design of Captain Dixon if I could, I do not particularly fear him, since I know he means me no bodily harm."

"You right there," broke in the beldam, emphatically. "My master do well by you. You no fear him."

"Whether I fear him or not," said Kate, "I do not choose to make my position worse by useless opposition. So you may commence your labors of service with the assurance that you are to have no trouble from me. I tell you this because I want you to be kind to me—because I want you to grant me as many favors as you can;—and when you find me taking advantage of a favor, you can take your revenge. Do you understand me?"

The woman's face lighted up with a brighter gleam than had yet irradiated it, and with an expressive nod she answered,—

"We see. I do all I can. You want me, you ring bell. That cord pulls it."

"Am I to walk in the garden?"

"By'm by, when I walk with you. You no go alone."

Kate signified by her silence that she had no more to ask, and Hagar picked up the tray and went away.

When evening came Hagar brought in lamps, and shortly afterward brought tea. An hour later Barker Dixon came, bringing with him a hamper full of books. He did not offer to take a seat—he did not even remove his hat—but remarked, as he removed the contents of the hamper,—

"I want to make you as comfortable as I can, Kate, and I have thought that these books would help you to pass more cheerfully a few of your lonesome hours."

"You are very good, sir, and very thoughtful," said Kate, respectfully.

The pirate looked up from his work with an expression of mingled surprise and pleasure.

"Indeed, Kate, you are taking it rationally."

"Why should I not?" she returned, frankly.

"You know that I would escape from your trap if I could; but I do not think it policy to lacerate myself by useless struggling. If the fate is fixed, I must abide. To implore your mercy would be a waste of breath."

"Not so, lady. I will be as merciful as man can be that loves. If you ask me to forego my determination of marriage, why, then, I grant you, I shall be utterly impervious to either prayer or blandishment."

"I think I understand you."

A little pause, and then she added,—

"Captain Dixon, you said to me to-day that you had been cognizant of Friday's services to me. I have no desire, and I certainly have not the native propensity, to deceive. But I would have you to know that Friday has done nothing which could appear to him wrong. I think he would have suffered the loss of a hand before he would have knowingly betrayed the trust you gave him. I say this because he was kind to me, and I cannot bear the thought that he should suffer on my account."

"Make yourself entirely easy on that score," returned Dixon. "I know the old darkey well; and I knew him when I detailed him for your service. He has not disappointed me. I have nothing laid up against him."

"I am glad of that."

The pirate nodded his gratitude, and presently Kate asked,—

"Have you sent for the priest yet?"

"No. I shall send the boat off to-morrow morning. We do not send out decoys by daylight."

"It is not a long run?"

"No. If the holy father is found at home, and is well, he may be here within three days."

Dixon arranged the books on the sideboard, and after a few remarks of no particular importance he bade the captive good-evening, and took his leave. Kate had had it upon her tongue to ask him if *he* was going to Isabelique after the priest, but she kept the question back. When he had gone she arose and went to the books. She was not in the mood for reading, but she found pictures and charts which afforded her entertainment.

On the following morning Hagar brought in the breakfast, and when she came the second time to remove the tray, she brought with her a dusky damsel whom she introduced as her daughter, Leah.

"When I can't come," she said, "Leah will come in my place. Leah and I will do well."

Leah was a strong built, well-proportioned girl, not far from twenty years of age, and by no means ill-looking. Her skin was of that rich brown color peculiar to the West Indian; her features had but little of the negro cast; while her hair, black as black can be, hung in glossy ringlets low down upon her neck.

Kate greeted the new-comer with a cheerful word and a smile, and Leah was certainly pleased thereat. Her dark eyes sparkled with grateful light, and the inclination of her well-shaped head was kindly.

At noon Leah brought in the dinner, and Kate manifested great pleasure at seeing her.

"Don't fear to have me speak," said Kate, beseechingly. "I mean to ask no treachery. I know whom you serve, and I know what your duty is. But you can let me talk. I shall die of inaction if I cannot talk to somebody. You know how natural it is for a woman to use her tongue. Don't you find it so?"

Leah laughed outright. Her speech was an odd mixture of mongrel Spanish and English which we cannot attempt to follow; but her voice was soft and musical, and she possessed that happy faculty of gesticulation and facial expression which gives ready indication of meaning despite the imperfections of language.

"I love to talk," she said, "and if my mother will let me, I will talk with you."

There must have been magnetism in Kate's presence—a magnetism which captivated the dusky maiden in spite of herself. The captive's only present aim was, to secure Leah's good opinion, and that she had done this was quickly and unmistakably evident.

At noon Leah came again, and this time she seemed as eager to cultivate Kate's friendship as Kate did to cultivate hers. She showed little attentions of kindness, and her voice grew more and more musical as she talked. Evidently no earthly consideration could have induced her to betray the trust reposed in her by the pirate chieftain; but there was, nevertheless, an undercurrent of feeling which led her to respect and love that which was pure and good. At all events, unless the light of her eyes, and the pleasurable glow of the dusky face, and the music of her voice, were unaccountably treacherous, her sympathies were all with the beautiful captive whom she had been called to serve. Kate saw this, and was glad; but not yet did she presume upon it. A sudden shock might snap the tender cord asunder. She would wait until it was stronger.

Hagar herself brought in the supper, and though Kate was disappointed, she made no sign. She would not show to the beldam that she preferred the presence of the daughter; so she was pleasant and chatty, and thanked the old woman for her attention.

And Hagar came to remove the dishes. But half an hour later Leah made her appearance with a basket of fruit upon her arm, which she said the captain had sent up for her.

"I am glad to see you, good Leah, but I am not hungry for fruit,—that is, not now."

"These plantains are very nice," urged Leah. "They are ripened just right, and Friday said he knew you would eat them, if you didn't eat anything else."

"Friday?" said Kate, quickly and eagerly.

"Friday brought the basket up from the vessel."

The hint was not lost. Such a word as that from Friday had meaning—a meaning, probably, unknown to Leah; so Kate accepted the fruit, and said she should certainly enjoy the plantains.

"Do you see Friday often?" she asked, after she had taken the basket, and set it upon the floor.

"I see him every day."

"If you please, Leah, I wish you would tell Friday that I am well, and that I remember his kindness to me with a great deal of thankfulness. Will you tell him this?"

"Indeed I will," answered the girl, with a resoluteness which seemed to imply that she would dare anything in a work so simply and so innocently humane as that.

"And if I should wish to send to Friday any little token of my gratitude, would you give it to him?"

"What would it be?"

"A trinket, or a bit of gold."

"Yes,—I would! I am not afraid to do that much, if you—you—"

"Speak on, Leah."

"Well, lady,—it must be secret, both for your good and for mine."

Kate arose and took the girl's hand.

"Leah," she said, with solemn earnestness, "were you to do me service like this, I would die before I would betray you in any way!"

The dusky maiden raised the small white hand to her lips and kissed it.

"I care for you," she said; "so be careful for yourself."

And with this she left the apartment.

As soon as Kate found herself alone she took the basket into her lap. The plantains were on top, and they were handsome ones, but she thought not of their luscious look of appetizing promise,—it was promise of another kind that stirred her spirit. Why had Friday particularly called her attention to the plantains? She had never expressed to him any liking therefor. In fact, she had none such. There must be another meaning. Carefully arranged in the centre of the group she observed a plantain larger and more golden than its mates, and this she took up first. Near the apex its rind was cracked, as though from exuberance, and upon pulling this covering away from the fruity pulp, she discovered a small bit of paper, neatly folded, packed away within. She cast a quick glance at the door, and at the window; and then she drew forth the paper and opened it. It proved to be, as she had from the first suspected, a missive from Tom. The paper was necessarily small, and the contents brief. She read as follows:

> "KATE,—God bless and save you! Can you send me a line in return for this? Let me know what is being done. What can I do? What shall I attempt? I am at liberty, and can command at least one true and effective friend. If you can get a reply into Friday's hand, I shall receive it. Once more—God bless and protect you!—God help us both! TOM."

For a time Kate was so deeply agitated that she was forced to walk to and fro to compose herself; but at length she resumed her seat, and reflected. By and by she went to the sideboard, and from one of the books she tore a blank leaf, and upon this she wrote with a pencil. Her hand was now steady, and she wrote plainly and distinctly.

Later in the evening Hagar came in, but made no stop. The captive required no service at her hands, and she bade her charge a very cheerful good-night, and left.

Kate retired at an early hour, and slept, and dreamed.

In the morning Hagar brought in the breakfast. Kate would have given the world, had it been hers to give, for the unrestricted privilege of asking for Leah; but she dared not do it. Nor dared she betray her anxiety. With a wondrous effort she hid her rebellious emotions, and received the beldam with a smile of welcome.

An hour later—thank God,—Leah came to take away the tray. Kate took her hand as she bade her good-morning, and kissed her upon the cheek. The dusky maiden quivered with glad delight, and in return pressed Kate's hand to her lips.

As Leah gathered up the dishes Kate talked of the night; of the fruit; of the island; of the sea; and of the crew of the brig; and finally, as Leah gave token that she must go, she said, as though the thought had just occurred to her,—

"Leah—just one moment.—I came near forgetting.—Wait a little."

She went into her sleeping-room and came out with a small piece of gold in one hand and a piece of paper in the other. She laid the paper upon the table, and proceeded to fold the gold piece closely up therein. She folded and pressed it compactly, and then, with a bright smile, she said,—

"Good Leah, I wish you would give that to Friday. I would like for him to get it, and he will know that I have not forgotten him. Its value is not much, but he will know that my blessing goes with it."

"I will tell him," said Leah, as she put out her hand for the parcel.

"You will give it into his own hand?"

"I will."

"God bless you, Leah!"

Leah took the precious memento, and put it carefully away in the bosom of her dress; and as she did so her large lustrous eyes were flowing with liquid light. Her maiden's heart had never been moved with sympathy like this before.

CHAPTER XII.

A SHOCK!

Tom Gaston, when he had seen Kate Arlington borne away to the pirate's island lair, went below, and for a time was as one distracted. His imagination pictured the worst possible fate for his beloved, and he could think of her only as lost. At length, however, the memory of his interview with Kate in the cockpit came to his assistance, and he tried to find hope in the assurance she had given him. Ere long, too, Luke Gunbar came down, and offered him the best that could be offered under the circumstances.

"Doctor," said he, taking Tom's hand as he spoke, "I'm goin' to open myself with a whole heart. I've had one life, and I wasted it in an evil way. I consider that when you came aboard the brig I was a dead man. I'd been killed as pirates have been killed in all time. I'd finished my voyage, and had closed my log. How long could I have lived if you hadn't found me?"

"You could not have lived long, certainly—not many days."

"I shouldn't have lived to reach this port?"

"No."

"Then you gave me back my life. Isn't it so?"

"I think I saved you, Luke."

"Exactly. I was dead, and you revived me. I'd lost one life, and you gave me another. And now, Thomas Gaston, I'll hold this new life as belonging to you while you need it. I'll stand by you through thick and thin; and I may be able to help you."

Tom tried to speak his thanks, but could find no words.

"Hold on," interrupted Gunbar, still retaining the doctor's hand. "I know all you would say. If I didn't know your heart was as big as your head is clear, I wouldn't feel as I do. As I said before, I can help you; but it mustn't be suspected, not even by Wade. We must lay low, and keep dark. If anybody suspects that I am standin' by you, the cap'n may get hold of it, and then good-bye to you and me both. Let us be wary, and show no sign of our real feelin's. You understand?"

"Bless you! yes," replied Tom, giving the gunner a hearty embrace. "And," he added, with moistened eyes, "I accept your offer; and may God lend His aid to the right."

And so these men understood one another from that time. Their conference was necessarily brief, from causes already stated by Luke. As has been intimated, the gunner's mate had kept to himself,—or, had kept from all save himself and the doctor—a knowledge of his real improvement. It was generally thought that his shoulder was still weak, and for most of the time he carried his arm in a sling; but, in reality, he was quite strong and well. The inflammation had entirely subsided, and the muscles of the breast and back were in excellent tune. His blood had been pure, and his general health good, and nature had worked wonders, as she always will work when she has a fair chance.

And so Luke Gunbar did not report for duty; and in consideration of his eminent services in past times, and in consideration of his petty office of gunner's mate, and also in consideration of the services which were expected of him in the time to come, he was granted unlimited privilege. In the times agone he had been one of the foremost in reckless daring, and no plan of plunder had been too bold or hazardous for his undertaking. And, again, he had been as one utterly lost to all moral or humane consideration; and that he could contemplate a reformed life for the future did not enter into the wildest dreams of his shipmates. In fact, had he confessed to them such a thing, they would have accepted it as the best joke of the season. That he was as one raised from the dead they did not remember. That he had been stricken as Saul of Tarsus was stricken they could not know, because they had no possible conception of the Divine light which could irradiate and warm the hardest heart to which it had once been admitted.

And so Luke Gunbar wore his arm in a sling, and paid but little attention to the doctor in presence of the crew.

And the doctor, on his part, was not without occupation. He had several patients on his hands, and it was well that it was so. His deep devotion to his profession, and his love of ministering to his suffering fellows, found ample food in his care for the wounded ones of the pirate's crew; and as he was attentive to them, and ready at every call of professional duty, he was respected and honored by the men, and treated with consideration by the chieftain.—What Dixon's ulterior designs concerning himself were he could not tell. Dixon had avoided him from the first; and the avoidance had been marked since they had come into port; and Gaston did not seek to overcome it.

On the morning following the arrival at the Green Island a pinnace was manned, under command of Mark Rowland, and made ready for sea. It was a large boat, of fifteen or twenty tons measurement, and constructed for swift sailing. Upon the top-gallant forecastle a pivot gun was set,—a short twelve-pounder;—and a six-pounder at the stern.

"What does that mean?" asked Gaston, as he stood upon the quarter-deck of the Adder, and saw the pinnace fitting out from her covered dock on shore.

"I don't know," returned Luke Gunbar. "The pinnace has done great work ere this in the way of reprisal. I've been in her when she's taken a heavy ship under her wing, and held her until she was stripped. She's a keen one to sail, and them guns aren't to be laughed at. I've done better work with that twelve-pound bull-dog on her forecastle than could be done with a full battery of common carronades. But—I don't think she's bound on a maraudin' cruise now. I can't conceive how it can be.—No, of course not.—Mark Rowland's goin' in command, and Jack Thorp is to stay behind. That wouldn't be if there were to be hard knocks. There's to be palaverin' of some sort. That's Rowland's gift."

"Still," suggested Tom, "they are taking a goodly crew, and well armed."

"Sartin," responded Luke, with a smiling nod. "Dixon wouldn't send out any of his lambs in these waters without proper means of defence. And, again, if 'twas a maraudin' errand, as I said afore, Jack Thorp and Captain Dixon wouldn't both stay behind. But you rest easy. Here comes old Gurney. I'll find out what's up if I can." And the gunner's mate went away in quest of information.

It was after noon when Luke met the doctor below, and communicated to him the information he had received.

"The pinnace," said he, "is bound for Isabelique, on the coast of San Domingo. She goes out to bring back an old priest of our acquaintance—one Father Riego."

Gaston started and quivered, and his face grew a shade paler as he returned Luke's gaze.

"A priest?" he repeated, in a whisper,—"a regular priest?"

"Yes."

"One legally ordained?"

"I don't know what you call it; but I know he's a priest, and that he has charge of half the souls in Isabelique."

"He is a friend of Dixon's?"

"Yes."

"Luke, you know why this priest is sent for?"

"Yes. It's to marry our chief."

"And he would do it?"

"He'll do it if he comes."

"And he will come if Rowland finds him?"

"He will, sartin."

Tom bowed his head, and reflected. At length he said,—

"Luke, I must get a line to Miss Arlington. How can I do it?"

"We must watch the chances, Doctor. I'll help you in that. We can do nothing in a hurry."

And from that time they both watched; and at length it came to Tom's knowledge that old Friday was going to carry some fruit up from the vessel to the stone house for Kate. He prepared a note, and saw Friday, and managed to slip the missive beneath the rind of a plantain.

On the afternoon of the day following the dispatch of his note Tom was in the sick-bay attending to his patients, when he saw Friday come down into the steerage. As quickly as possible he was with the old negro, who gave him the parcel he had received from Leah.

"It come from Miss Kate," he whispered; "an' she's found a friend in Leah. I'm s'prised; but dar's no tellin' what a gal like Kate can do. Golly! she captivated me right off. An' she's captivated Leah."

"Who is this Leah?"

"She's Hagar's gal, an' I s'pose ole Moses is her fader; but she an't a nigger,—she's all Injun,—and she's a pooty one, too. I wouldn't 'ab b'l'eb'd 'at Kate could done it; but Leah an't treacherous. If she's gone friend for de lady, be sure she'll stick.—Sh! Don't let 'em see us togedder. If you want me agin, you'll find me easy enough. De best place to come is in de cabin when de cap'n's ashore."

With this Friday went on deck, and the doctor returned to the sick-bay, and on the first opportunity he opened the parcel he had received, which he found to be an American half-eagle folded into a piece of paper; and upon the paper he found writing—an answer to his own note, as follows:

> "DEAR TOM,—Your note reached me safely, and I will try and return the favor. I think I had better, if possible, make my escape from this place. The plot thickens. Dixon has sent away for a priest. If I am here when that priest arrives the worst must come speedily thereafter. I am not quite sure that it would be safe to tempt the fate. I think that with assistance I could leave this house. My window overlooks a garden. Hereafter I will leave a casement open after dark, with my lamp so arranged that the direction can be seen from without. If any arrangement can be made, an arrow, shot by a sure hand, may be made to bear to me a knowledge thereof.
>
> "Don't risk your life, Tom; but if you can help me without that risk, do so. If Friday seeks further to send by the hand of Leah, bid him not let Leah know it. She is true, but I doubt if she would knowingly betray her father. God bless you, Tom!—Don't borrow trouble on my account.
>
> "Truly and lovingly, KATE."

Gaston read, and re-read, the missive.

"Brave girl!" he murmured, pressing it to his lips. "She would rather suffer than have me in danger! But she shall be set free if there is power on earth to do it!"

Not long afterward he found opportunity to speak privately with Friday.

"What did Leah tell you when she gave you the package?" he asked.

"She said 'twas for me; but den I know'd, ob course, 'twas for you."

"Part of it was for me, good Friday, and part was for you. This is your part." And he gave him the gold piece.

The negro's eyes sparkled with gratitude.

"Leah said Miss Kate tole her I'd been good to her, an' dat she sent me sumf'n for a keepsake; but I didn't t'ink it could be any-t'ing only for you."

"She sent me a note, Friday, and she says that Leah must not know that the whole parcel was not for yourself."

"I understand," said the negro, quickly. "I'll keep dark."

Not until evening did Tom find opportunity to speak with Luke Gunbar.

"Easy, Doctor! You're all in the wind."

"Not quite, Luke, though I know I am deeply agitated.—The time has come when I must either do, or die! I have received a note from Miss Arlington. If she is there when the priest comes, all is lost! Do you know the lay of the land around the stone house?"

"Yes, Doctor,—I know it well."

"Kate says she will leave a casement of her room open at night, and a lamp burning; and she says an arrow shot into the apartment might bear to her a knowledge of our plans."

"She says all that?"

"Yes.—Listen."

And Tom opened the note, and read what Kate had written. He would have proceeded with his own annotations, but Luke interrupted him.

"Hold on, Doctor. Let me think."

And the gunner's mate turned away, and pulled his closely curling hair for a long time with nervous intensity. By and by he came back, and his countenance was clear, though hard set and firm.

"Doctor," he said, in tones low and deep, "I will go on shore in half an hour. If you would write anything, write it, and I will dispatch it if I can."

"But—Luke—what can I write?—What can we do?"

"Write to her that she must hold herself in readiness for anything that may happen after this night. To-night I will get the bearin's of every p'int—I'll know just what can be done; and, Tom Gaston, I'll stick by you to the death! To-morrow we'll lay our plans; and by another night we may be ready to do a good work. Write your note. Tell her to look sharp after to-morrow. We can't move before."

"And suppose the pinnace should return before that time?" queried Tom.

Luke could not hide his misgivings on that point.—Still he would hope.

"We cannot tell when the priest will come," he said. "We must go on without regard to that."

"The wind has been fair for the passage to and fro?"

"Yes,—the wind has been fair; but Father Riego does not move in a hurry."

Tom went away and wrote, and in less than an hour thereafter Luke Gunbar was on his way to the shore.

* * * * * *

Kate Arlington, on this same evening, when she had been left alone, with the prospect of being not again disturbed, threw open a casement of the window overlooking the garden, and arranged the light so that a person without might see the interior of her apartment. After this the minutes passed heavily away until almost midnight, and the tired watcher was thinking of retiring, when she was startled by a sharp whizzing in the air of the room, followed by a snap upon the wall opposite the window, and the falling of something upon the floor. She hurriedly picked the missile up, and found it to be an arrow, with a piece of paper bound around the shaft directly below the head. With rare presence of mind she leaped upon a chair, directly against the point where the arrow had struck, and waved her kerchief above her head—waved it until she knew that the eye which had directed the arrow must have seen it if it had remained on the watch. Then she got down and proceeded to read the note.

It was from Tom, and was full of love and hope—a longer letter than he had sent by Friday; and he told her to be ready for anything that friends without might find opportunity to offer.

> "We hope to come to-morrow night," he wrote. "Sleep by day, and watch through the night. Be prepared, and be strong. The way may look difficult, but a good God will watch over us. Pray for success."

When Kate had read the missive through she closed and fastened the casement, and then retired; and though her sleep was not unbroken, yet it was sufficient and refreshing.

On the following morning her first thought was to look out from the window of the drawing-room to see if she could discover traces of the messenger of the night. She saw upon the coping of high wall, beyond the orange trees, at a point whence the arrow must have come, that the vines climbing there had been disturbed. She noticed this particularly because that self-same spot had been open to her vision day after day, and she had almost counted the leaves that rested upon the masonry. Surely a man had climbed up there; and at that same point he might climb up again. Friends were near, and she mingled thanks with her prayers.

Hagar brought in the breakfast; and when it had been eaten Leah came to take away the dishes. Kate was cheerful and pleasant, and had many questions to ask; and she asked enough, indirectly, to receive the assurance that the Indian girl knew nothing of the transactions of the previous night.

Noon came, and dinner was eaten. The afternoon dragged slowly away—so slowly that time grew heavier upon the captive's spirit than she had ever known it before—and the time for supper arrived. Leah brought in the meal; and Hagar came to remove the tray; and as she opened the door Kate heard the sound of loud voices without, and a name fell upon her ear that caused her to start and listen more eagerly.

"Hagar, what noise is that?"

"Our master is glad," replied Hagar, with a succession of nods. "The good father is here."

"Father!—Who?"

"The Father Riego."

"He has come?"

"Yes. The wind was fair, and they found him at home, and he was glad to visit the Green Island again."

Kate asked no more. She sat down, and rested her hand upon her head, and allowed the beldam to depart with her tray. When she had been left alone she started to her feet, and strode rapidly across the room.

"Just Heaven!" she ejaculated. "Is our fair prospect to be thus blighted! Tom wrote that they must work before the pinnace returned. Must I face this calamity? It were better for me—better for Barker Dixon—that I should escape!"

She had spoken thus far when her attention was arrested by the sound of a heavy footfall near at hand, and in a moment more her door was opened, and the pirate chief entered. His face was flushed, as though with wine, and his look was jubilant and triumphant.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

BURDETT COUTTS.

One of the central figures of English aristocracy, and perhaps THE central figure of the wealthy ones of the Old World, is Lady Burdett Coutts. We see by an English paper that at a recent meeting at Brighton, Louis Napoleon and Eugénie were given seats very near to the lady in question, which reminds us of a paragraph that we saw in a French paper in Marseilles in 1843, to the effect that a contract of marriage had been arranged between Prince Louis Napoleon and Miss Burdett Coutts. At that time the impecunious nephew of his uncle would undoubtedly have appreciated a personal interest in Miss Coutts' millions, but whether she had any desire to share his then uncertain fortune we cannot say.

It is a somewhat curious revolving of fortune's wheel that has brought this vast wealth to Lady Burdett Coutts. The originator of the fortune was Thomas Coutts, a banker of the last century. When a young man Coutts formed a somewhat romantic marriage with a servant girl, named Susan Starkie, by whom he had three children, all daughters. These daughters were handsome, and their father's wealth lifted them into good society. One of them married the Earl of Guilford, another married the Marquis of Bute, and the third became the wife of Sir Francis Burdett. To Sir Francis and his wife was born a daughter whom they named Angela Georgiana—the subject of this sketch, and of course granddaughter of the old banker.

In 1815, Coutts lost his first wife, and very shortly thereafter he married Harriet Mellon, an actress of celebrity, to whom he had been for a long time partial, and upon whom he had settled a hundred thousand pounds sterling while his first wife had been living. He lived twenty years after this second marriage, and at his death, as he had already made handsome settlements upon his daughters, he left the whole of his enormous property, yielding an income of nearly one hundred thousand pounds per annum, without reservation, to his widow.

The widow, however, did not remain a widow long. In a few years she gave her hand to the Duke of St. Albans, a youth of only two or three and twenty, and nearly related to the royal family, while she must have been full forty. But the Duke was the poorest peer in the kingdom, while the gentle Harriet was the richest woman. The match gave rise to even more scandal than had Harriet's first marriage; but the Duke cared not. He had been lifted from absolute penury into golden abundance, and he dashed into dissipation with a recklessness that soon brought his earthly career to an end, and Harriet was again left a widow, not only with her enormous fortune, but with the title of Duchess of St. Albans. All that earth could afford of wealth and station was hers, and she did not marry again, though many were the opportunities afforded. Having no children of her own she resolved that the property which she had received from her first husband should revert to his family, and she selected Miss Angela Georgiana, daughter of Sir Francis Burdett, as her heir on condition that she should assume the name of Coutts. Miss Burdett willingly took the name of her grandfather, and, no doubt, very willingly took the fortune; but when we state that nearly, if not quite her entire income is expended for charitable purposes, it will be seen that humanity gained a blessing when Miss Burdett consented to become Miss BURDETT-COUTTS. The lady was born in 1814, so that she has hardly yet passed the prime of her life. C.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A LITTLE boot-black picked up a five-cent nickel on the sidewalk in front of the *Ledger* office yesterday, and was crowing over his prize, when a burly carman demanded it, saying that he had just dropped it. "Your five-cent piece hadn't no hole in it!" said the boy defiantly. "Yes, it had," said the rogue of a claimant. "Well, *this* one *ha'n't!*" said the boy, as he walked off in triumph, leaving his opponent to be jeered by the crowd.

A LONG-HAIRED young local editor of an Arkansas paper does an obituary notice thus: "The sister angels of the lovely deceased, pining at her absence from their heavenly abode, floated down on jewelled pinions and bore her back to her native skies. She was a good worker, and was known from the Great River of the West to the Eastern Seas as a pre-eminently lovely type of radiant girlhood."

A YOUNG lady of Michigan dug a well forty feet deep last summer, and received one hundred and thirty dollars therefor from her father. She received numerous offers of marriage from young farmers who wanted wells dug, just after she completed her job, but she declined them all, saying that she thought it best to "let well enough alone."

"KATY," said a lady to her "help," the other morning, "was there any fire in the kitchen last night, while you were sitting up?" "Only just a *spark*, ma'am," was the reply. The lady looked suspiciously at Katy, but the innocent girl went on scrubbing, and humming, "Katy darling."

LUKE had it in the beginning; Paul had it at the end; boys never have it; girls have it but once; a square never has it; an angle has it in one spot; and a parallelogram has it three times. But there is no need of making a fuss about it. It is simply the letter l.

A SOUTH-SHORE Long Islander, on his first visit to New York with his sweetheart, seeing the bunches of bananas in Fulton Market, exclaimed, "Look there, Sue! I'll be mowed if them an't the biggest beans I ever seen!"

WHY is the sluggard told to go to the ant to learn a lesson of industry? Because he can there recline upon a mossy bank, and observe the ways of the diligent insect at his leisure and without fatigue.

THE Richford (Vt.) *Sentinel* says, "By the marriage of two couples in the Methodist church, on Wednesday, the sparking business has been brought to a triumphant close for the present season."

QUESTION: "Boy, did you ever fight in the wrong?" *Answer:* "Yes, sir." *Question:* "Why?" *Answer:* "Because I didn't know till I got the worst of it that I'd got hold of the *wrong* fellow!"

IT is a curious fact that although rain keeps thousands of people away from church on Sundays, it seldom keeps a lady from a ball or party, or a man from his business, on week-days.

SAID a witty lady, "It doesn't matter how watchful a girl may be against impertinence. If some forward person kisses her, it is ten to one that he will do it right under her nose."

"MAY it please your Honor, I'm deaf in one ear," said a juryman. "Then you may leave the box," replied the judge, "as it is necessary for a juror to hear both sides."

"I CAN'T drink liquor," said a young man; "it goes right to my head." "Well," retorted a friend, "it couldn't go anywhere where it would be less crowded."

THE fashion is now to issue wedding cards and invitations to gold and silver weddings with the words "No plated ware" printed in one corner in plain type.

A PUPIL in one of the public schools recently revised an old saying found in his grammar, as follows: "It is better to give than to receive—a good licking."

BAD habits will never hurt any one who does not seek for them. No one was ever yet stung by hornets who did not go where they were.

A MERCHANT of this city being asked how he spent his time, replied, "At night I store my mind, and during the day I mind my store."

WHEN is a murderer like a gun? When he is let off. Those reports are too common now a days.

A BAD style of arithmetic—Division among families.

CURRENT ITEMS.

THE English authorities of Madras propose to make it unlawful for a married Christian to change his religion. An English member of the bar there pretended to become a convert to Mohammedanism, and at once gave his Christian wife the company of a harem of dusky beauties. She naturally complained, but the law could do nothing. The plea of a change of religion was a bar to all criminal prosecution.

A NURSE in East Windsor, N. J., was arrested the other day for feeding pins to a child whom she was employed to take care of. The act was perpetrated in revenge for what she considered disrespectful treatment at the hands of the child's parents. The poor little thing suffered terribly, and came near dying, but its life was finally saved.

TWO Germans, who were both in love with and quarrelled about the same lady, lately fought a duel, near Philadelphia, with bowie knives and standing toe to toe. After one of them had his mouth extended through his cheek to the left ear by a tremendous slash, the seconds interfered, stopped the fight, and carried the wounded man home.

YUCATAN people have a very exhaustive method of treating wrecked vessels. When the American steamer *Lizzie Webster* was driven ashore on the coast some time since, one-third of the cargo was taken by the Government, one-third was taken by the people as salvage, and the other third was stolen.

THE climate of the Argentine Republic is so dry, it is said, that a bowl of water left uncovered in the morning is dry at night; ink vanished from the inkstand as if by magic. The bodies of dead animals dry up, instead of decomposing, and neither exercise nor exposure to the sun's rays produces perspiration.

DURING a recent thunder-shower, a farmer of Hubbardton, Vt., had seventeen sheep killed by lightning. They were standing under a maple-tree. Their owner went immediately to the spot, and found one apparently stunned, which he assisted to its feet, when it ran off. The rest were dead.

ON the occasion of blasting a large rock on the breakwater at Block Island, a short time ago, the concussion seemed to jar the whole island, and threw a column of water at least fifty feet in the air, and scattered particles of stone and dead fish far around on every side.

A DESTRUCTIVE fire was started at Cherokee Strip, Kansas, by a widow who had lost a log chain on the prairie and set the grass on fire to find it. A great deal of property was destroyed, and the widow is no longer popular in that neighborhood.

A CITIZEN of Saundersville fell dead on the track of the Providence Railroad, and his companions, in attempting to remove his body, so as to prevent its being run over by an advancing train, barely escaped being run over themselves.

A CHARLESTON, S. C., paper says that a citizen of that place committed suicide recently because he had devoured so many reed birds that he was unable to eat the especially fine one which he had reserved for the last.

A LIVERY-STABLE keeper of Greenville, R. I., visited a relative in Foster, on Friday of last week, and the next morning he found that some one had cut his horse's throat, and the animal lay dead in the stable.

THE black bears of Vermont seem to have a great aversion to being caught. One of them recently twisted his leg off above the gambrel joint, and left it in the trap, sooner than stay with it.

LOVE induced a beautiful and accomplished girl of Chicago to marry a blind man with a club foot. He was a poor man, while his wife has an income of $1,500 a year.

A YOUNG lady in Tennessee broke her arm on the eve of her wedding-day, but pluckily went through the ceremony with her arm in a sling, at the appointed hour.

A DWELLING-HOUSE was burned in Cornish, N. H., on Monday evening of last week, and an elderly lady, seventy-eight years old, perished in the flames.

A GENTLEMAN living near Flatbush, L. I., shot at what he supposed to be a grape thief, the other night, and killed his favorite Bramah rooster.

MRS. LEVY of Bethel, Me., was burned to death a few mornings ago, by her clothes taking fire while she was lighting a lamp.

A LADY of New Haven, Conn., had the whole of an expensive lace trimming to her dress stolen from her in church the other day.

BOATING BY MOONLIGHT.

BY GEORGE WALTER KYLE.

Her rose-bud lips were smiling,
And her blue-bell eyes were bright,
In the glitter of the moon-beams,
That glorious autumn night,
When we sailed the silent river,
And none but we were near,
While my oars kept time to the low, sweet song
Of the voice so soft and clear.

Gliding, gliding down the pleasant stream,
Gliding, gliding in a happy dream;
What could be happiness to compare with this?
The sky is bright, our hearts are light,
And all the world is bliss.

'Twas then I found she loved me,
And I asked her to be mine.
She said that she would sail with me
Down the swift stream of time;
And though the storms of life should come,
And bleak winds loudly roar,
That side by side we'd stem the tide,
And reach a happier shore,
Gliding, gliding, etc.

◆

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

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CHAPTER XLI.

MOER'S PAST FURTHER UNVAILED.

Darrel Moer was unable to shake off his terrifying impression that the Hungarian Countess whom he had seen in Lady Thaxter's drawing-room for a moment, and whose agitation at sight of him had been so marked, had known him at some past time, and that her knowledge of him had extended to some of the darker deeds of his life. He hurried home in a state of mental perturbation such as he had rarely experienced, and hastened up to his own room, where he found his valet and confidant engaged in his usual duties.

Bing dropped his master's dress coat, which he held in his hands, and exclaimed:

"How strangely you look, sir! Are you ill?"

"Pour some brandy!" said Moer hoarsely, sinking into the nearest chair.

Bing obeyed, bringing a full glass to his employer, who took a liberal draught, and the valet again demanded if his master were ill.

"No, no!" said Moer impatiently. "Don't be absurd, Bing. I am a little excited, that's all. Have you ever seen this Hungarian Countess, Lady Rothsmere, who is visiting Lady Thaxter? Have you seen her in her drives? Has she ever called here?"

"No, sir, I have never seen her," replied Bing, wondering. "She has called here once or twice with Lady Thaxter, I have heard the servants say, but she was deeply vailed on both occasions. Have you heard, sir, that my lord is going to marry her? They say down in the servants' hall that he has been at Lady Thaxter's house every day for the last three weeks, and he sends a hot-house bouquet to Lady Rothsmere every morning regular; and when the Countess was ill he sent her a silver filagree basket full of delicious grapes and hot-house peaches and strawberries and pines, worth a fortune. Mrs. Poss thinks his lordship is engaged to marry the Countess."

"What nonsense!" ejaculated Moer. "His lordship will never marry again. He worships the memory of his first wife. He is civil to this beautiful young Countess because she is the guest of his especial friend, who is also a kinswoman of his late wife. He may conceive himself under obligations to Lady Thaxter, who has been very kind to him, and who dearly loved his son now dead. Cannot an old man of sixty-eight offer civilities to a beautiful young woman without creating a tumult in his servants' hall? But this is not the question. Who is this Countess?"

"She is the widow of the great Hungarian statesman, Ludovic Count Rothsmere," answered Bing, with an air of possessing superior information.

"I know that; but who was she before she married the Count?" demanded Moer irascibly. "She is only about thirty, so she must have married the Count when he had grown old. I saw her to-day at Lady Thaxter's—not an hour ago in fact—and I know that I have seen her before. More than that, I know that my life is an open book to her. More still—she is my enemy!"

"Your enemy, sir? Impossible!"

"She looked at me in a sort of awe, terror and hatred," continued Moer, regardless of his valet's remark. "Her face grew deathly white. And then she glided out of the room swiftly without speaking, and disappeared. But in the momentary glimpse I had of her, I gained a positive knowledge that she is my enemy. I must have wronged her in some way. The thought occurred to me since seeing her—it is incredible—impossible—and yet she may be Carmine—"

Bing uttered an exclamation of incredulity and amazement.

"It is ten years since I placed Carmine in that private asylum in the south-eastern part of Huntingdonshire," said Moer, with agitation—"at a good distance from the Cypresses, which is in the north-eastern portion of the county, you know. She went mad on our return from that summer trip to Germany after our secret marriage. She was a pure and honorable girl, if she was an actress. She came of good family, of German descent, and there had been a title somewhere in her ancestry. She was educated and refined, and I had a short-lived passion for her, of such intensity that I risked my prospects, my entire future, to make her my wife."

"It was as mad an act as ever was known," muttered Bing.

"I was always a creature of impulse. My own will has been my guide through life. If I have wanted a thing, I have obtained it at all cost. Carmine Roff was a star, a beauty, and was called 'La belle Carmine.' She was virtuous, well-bred, noble of soul. I was infatuated with her, and married her. She agreed to keep the marriage secret from my uncle. I took her to Germany for the summer, introducing her there as my wife. But I already repented my bargain, and beat vainly at the bonds with which I had fettered myself. I began to see that I had thrown myself away. The mist of my passion beginning to clear, I was in terror lest my uncle should hear of my marriage, and cast me off as he had cast off his own and only son. And so, although Carmine was my lawfully wedded wife, and I introduced her to a few of my English friends whom I met at Baden-Baden as my wife, yet whenever I spoke of her to those young fellows, and she was not present, I did so with a shrug of my shoulders, a wink of the eye, a curl of the lip, that conveyed to them all the impression that she was not my wife, and that she was not an honest woman."

"It was well done," said Bing, with a devilish smile.

"Was it not? I was always clever," said Moer self-approvingly. "Carmine had made a few English acquaintances on the strength of her relationship to me. As Mrs. Darrel Moer, she was greatly admired. But when the story of my insinuations was whispered around, she was cut dead by her new friends, and one of them told her the reason. Carmine came to me, demanding that I should rebuke her insulters. I laughed at her tragedy airs, and she sulked. No one spoke to her thenceforward, but no one cut me," said Moer, stroking his chin. "I was invited out without Carmine, and even the ladies who would not suffer the hem of their garments to touch hers smiled upon me. It's a queer world, Bing, where a woman is punished for a crime in which her partner is held guiltless, or if reproved, he is reproved as 'that naughty creature,' and is not forbidden the houses of first-class people. Carmine smarted under the undeserved odium into which she had fallen, and I brought her back to England. These facts you already know, Bing, for you accompanied us on that trip, yet my meeting with the Countess brings it all back to me so vividly that I cannot resist speaking of it."

"But the Countess cannot be the same with 'La belle Carmine,'" objected Bing. "Your wife went mad."

"So she did. When we arrived in London, and our marriage was not divulged, and she continued to be known as Carmine Roff, after having been abroad with me as my wife, she found herself reviled, insulted, and abandoned by her best friends. She besought me on her knees to declare our marriage. I was tired of her: I repented my marriage; and I refused. She implored me to allow her to reveal our marriage to Squire Floyd, now Lord Waldemar, and I refused her with curses. I was always a devil when things went wrong with me. I was even brutal to her, I remember. I told her the marriage should never be acknowledged—that I had grown to hate her—that I had denied my marriage to every one. She was a nervous, excitable creature, and the upshot of it was she went mad, raving mad!"

"There was no mistake about her madness either," said Bing retrospectively.

"None at all. She tried to kill me. I found out—through you, Bing, who are informed on every subject—a doctor who lives down in Huntingdonshire, and takes mad people to board and look after. He had the necessary accommodations for her. I sent for him, and he came up to London. He examined into her mental condition; there was a council of physicians, and the proper papers were made out declaring 'Carmine Roff' to be of unsound mind, and unfit to be at large. My private mad-house doctor took her home with him. Everything was conducted in legal form, and my name did not appear in any way in connection with her. And so—as I supposed—I was rid of her. I went down to Huntingdonshire a few weeks after, and saw her in her padded room, chained to a ring in the wall, wild, frenzied, raving. She recognized me with a shriek that rang through the building, called me her husband, and went into such spasms as nearly frightened me out of my wits. I never went again. It is my creed to avoid everything painful and harrowing, to gather the roses for myself and leave the thorns for some one else. I would not subject myself to witnessing another such scene for a thousand pounds. Give me that tumbler again."

He took another draught of brandy, and wiped his brows which had grown wet under his agitation.

"The semi-annual payments for Carmine's board and treatment have been made in your name, Bing, and the bills have been sent to you punctually. As the woman was actually mad, and as the doctor had no suspicion of her relationship to me, the charges for her keeping have not been excessive. He has said in every letter that she is incurable. Now, as neither you nor I have seen her in ten years, Bing, is it not possible that she may have recovered, and been released by the doctor upon her agreement not to reveal to me the fact that she is free? Is it not possible that, having released her, he is keeping up his demands for money, believing me ignorant of her release? In short, is it not possible that I may have been, and am now being cheated by your Doctor Parfitt?"

"It is possible," acknowledged Bing; "but as he's a respectable physician it don't seem probable."

"That's nothing. I'm respectable and honored and courted—at least, I was courted till Lord Waldemar's new heiress appeared—but I'd do anything to further my own ends," said Moer. "Looks prove nothing. The most respectable people in appearance are often the greatest villains. Doctor Parfitt may have fooled me, and yet I can't feel sure that the Hungarian Countess is one and the same with Carmine Roff. How could Carmine have gone to Germany and married the great Hungarian statesman? I had but a brief view of Lady Rothsmere, but she did not look quite the same with Carmine."

"Miss Roff was very fair, with blue eyes, tall and finely shaped," said Bing.

"So is this Hungarian Countess. But Carmine had fair hair, such as distinguishes German women, and this beautiful Countess has gray hair—a delicately tinted pure gray hair, that contrasts oddly with her youthful and lovely face and fresh complexion."

"Gray hair, and so young!" exclaimed Bing. "I begin to believe her ladyship may turn out to be Carmine. It must have been some terrible trouble to turn her hair gray at her age. The heat in her brain, her constant brain excitement, and the rigorous treatment she doubtless experienced in the mad-house, would probably have turned Miss Roff's hair gray. If this Countess is Miss Roff, she is still your wife. She may interfere to prevent your marriage to Miss Floyd—"

"By Heaven! she will not. I am all excitement and uncertainty. I cannot endure it. If Lady Rothsmere by any chance or possibility is Carmine, she will work me trouble. She is certainly my enemy. Bing, you must go out immediately and telegraph to Doctor Parfitt the inquiry if Miss Roff is at his house. Tell him you have reason to believe she is in London—that you have seen her. That will fetch the truth out of him. Go immediately, and return with the reply."

Bing obeyed, hastening on his errand.

Darrel Moer waited impatiently one hour—two hours—three hours—for his valet's return.

It was well into the fourth hour when Bing reappeared, nearly breathless, and produced a reply to his telegram, and said:

"Doctor Parfitt lives ten miles from the station, and they had to send a mounted messenger out to him. Here is what he says."

He laid the message on his master's knee.

Darrel Moer seized it, and read as follows:

"MR. WATSON BING—Telegram received. Miss Roff escaped from asylum some weeks since. Have sought everywhere for her. Believed her to be drowned. Still incurable. Shall come on to London by first train to look for her. Hope to see you at my hotel, the Queen's, opposite P. O.

"DR. HARRIS PARFITT."

The muscles in Moer's face quivered as he read these lines. His eyes glared with a hunted look.

"The old humbug!" he muttered. "If you hadn't telegraphed, he would never have let you know of her escape. Escape! He released her! She's sane again. And he dares to pretend that she has been in his care until 'some weeks since!' He does not mean to acknowledge the truth, that she has been gone from his house for years, lest you force him to refund the sums you have paid him. The wretch! The miserable dosing thief! The animated pill-box! Curse him!"

"He'll probably come up to town to carry out his miserable pretence that she has recently escaped," said Bing.

"Well, don't go near him. Keep away from the Queen's. Wait till we get further information—till we get ready to settle with him. I won't humor the lying swindler by having you meet him."

"All right, sir," replied Bing. "I'll stop away. I believe now that the Hungarian Countess is Carmine Roff. How she came to marry a Hungarian Count while you were living, I can't see. Perhaps she heard that you were dead. But your instinct did not deceive you, sir. She is your enemy."

"I cannot induce Parfitt to entrap her and carry her back, I suppose," said Moer. "She has married into a powerful family. The old statesman Rothsmere has sons who are men of rank and influence at Vienna. They may be devoted to their young step-mother. They may know her history. To touch her may be to precipitate my own ruin. She is sane too, and Parfitt is too timid to shut up a sane person. He prates about his honor and the honor of his profession as a cover to his timidity. I cannot fight Lady Rothsmere. She carries too many guns for me. It is evident that she has not told her story to Lord Waldemar, or Tregaron, or Lady Thaxter, and she may be holding back for a purpose. I will take advantage of her temporary inactivity. If I cannot fight her, I will outwit her."

"How so?"

"I will marry Miss Floyd clandestinely on Saturday. If she exposes me, I'll threaten to prosecute her for bigamy."

"A good idea, sir," said the valet. "But if the Hungarian Countess is your wife, your marriage with Miss Floyd will not be legal."

"Who is to know it if Lady Rothsmere does not reveal it? and that, for her own sake, she will not do. This marriage will render me perfectly safe. I begin to feel my courage return, Bing. The Countess has the fear of prosecution for bigamy before her eyes. That accounts for her evident terror at sight of me."

"Then you have straight sailing ahead."

"Exactly. Honor Glint, as you have all along known, and as I have known, is not my wife. The existence of Carmine Roff, whom I believed buried in a mad-house, rendered that marriage at Bolton a mere farce. Honor Glint is not my wife," repeated Moer impressively. "That marriage is rendered null and void by the fact of my former wife's existence. Honor is a maiden still, with no right nor title to my name, and no claim whatever upon me. I'd have told her so yesterday, but I dared not. It's not well to let too much of one's business be known. If I had freed her with such a firebrand as that, she would have flown to Tregaron and told him that she was not my wife because I have a previous wife living. And then my prospects with Miss Floyd would be ruined. No, I must cause Honor to believe herself actually my wife. I shall let her live and die among those dreary fens, where to live even is to die, and I will riot in luxury as Hilda Floyd's husband. I've had my ups and downs, Bing, like other men, but henceforward I shall have everything my own way. I have been unscrupulous, heartless, fickle and villainous, but it has all paid. I am at last on the eve of a triumphant and glorious success!"

CHAPTER XLII.

A FURTHER BETRAYAL OF HILDA'S NATURE.

Darrel Moer having resolved, with the full force of his determined will, to compass all his desires, and to retrieve his past mistakes, as he deemed them, by a promising and wealthy marriage, swept on in his evil course as if driven by forces beyond his control. He regarded no obstacle; he gave heed to no considerations of decency or honor. His own will, as he loved to say, had been his guide all his life long, and it ruled his actions now.

The evening succeeding the events just narrated, he spent in the society of Miss Floyd and Mrs. Watchley. Lord Waldemar, with unwonted solicitude as to his toilet, an unwonted softness in his stern and gloomy eyes, and bearing a bunch of deliciously scented wood violets, procured from sunny Kentish woods, had gone to Lady Thaxter's to dine. His bouquet was intended for the Hungarian Countess, who had expressed in his hearing a longing for wild violets, and his lordship, with the devotion of a youthful lover, had that morning sent a messenger down into Kent with favorable result, the April showers and sunshine having called to life and beauty myriads of these scented bits of heaven. Darrel Moer made love in approved style, and Miss Floyd condescended to be pleased with him. Having had an almost infinity of practice in the art of "making love," Darrel Moer knew just how to flatter and quote poetry, to praise her eyes and her hair, and to whisper those "sweet nothings" which from loving lips are delicious indeed, but which when spoken by a false tongue, and emanating from a scheming brain, as now, are tasteless and intolerable.

The next morning, at as early an hour as was practicable, Darrel Moer drove to Doctors' Commons and procured a marriage license, affirming, as he had done in the case of Honor Glint, that "Hilda Floyd, spinster," had lived "in this parish" the full time prescribed by law, and that she was of full and sufficient age to contract marriage without the consent of her guardian, being twenty-one years old.

Upon this lying statement, he procured his license, and went with it to the house of the rector of St. Jude's, a moderately fashionable church in Belgravia, but so greatly eclipsed by St. George's, of Hanover Square, as to seldom serve as the scene of fashionable marriages. He did not see the rector, but found the curate and unfolded to him his errand, and made arrangements to have the marriage ceremony performed for his benefit and that of Hilda Floyd in St. Jude's church, the next morning, at eleven o'clock.

He took occasion to state that, although the lady had attained her majority, and was entitled by law to marry whom she pleased, being her own mistress absolutely, yet she was of such shy and shrinking temperament, and was at this time in such a state of invalid nervousness, that her friends thought it better that she should be married quietly, merely in the presence of her immediate family.

"The gentleman who has been her guardian will give her away," said Moer, "and she will be attended by her nearest lady friend. Be good enough to have the church open, and to keep out intruders."

He did not give his name, nor that of his promised bride, nor even show his license. He stated that he would have his license upon the next morning, and so went away, returning to Park Lane.

This was on Friday. The marriage had been appointed by Grimrod to take place upon the morning of the next day, Saturday.

Grimrod returned to town that—Friday—afternoon, and was closeted a couple of hours with Lord Waldemar, discussing business affairs. When these had been satisfactorily dispatched, the manager left his noble employer alone in the library and came to the drawing-room, where Miss Floyd, Mrs. Watchley and Darrel Moer were waiting the announcement of dinner.

Moer stood apart, at one of the windows, his hand nervously clutching the marriage license in the inner pocket of his coat. He was looking uneasily into the street, where the gas lamps burned brightly, and it almost seemed as if he expected some enemy to arrive and accuse him of some evil deed which he had committed, and so prevent the marriage which he had sworn in his soul to consummate.

Grimrod was struck by his manner.

He approached Moer silently, his footsteps sinking into the thick velvet carpet, and he laid his hand on Moer's shoulder with new familiarity. Darrel Moer sprang back, quivering and panting, as if the hand had been that of a police-officer.

"Who did you think it was?" asked Grimrod, with a smile on his dark inscrutable face—a smile as inscrutable as his countenance.

"I—I didn't know—I was startled!" stammered Moer. "It is a part of my code not to be surprised at anything, but you took me quite unawares."

"I fancy you expect some one."

"Oh, no," said Moer, forcing a laugh. "The truth is, I'm nervous. I have a right to be, have I not? I have in my pocket a document, by right of which the clergyman will place my freedom out of my hands and render me a bond-slave to a woman's caprices. Not that I repent," he added quickly. "I am happy—pleased—anxious. See, here is my marriage license."

He exhibited the document. Grimrod examined and returned it, and Moer slipped it back into its place of concealment.

"The ceremony at St. Jude's, at eleven in the morning," said Moer, looking out of the window. "Hilda is well-pleased. She is angry at Lord Waldemar on account of her music-master, who had the audacity to scold her to-day for 'stupidity and inattention.' The Signor is one of those fellows so wrapped up in his profession as to pay no heed to rank, wealth and beauty."

Grimrod glanced toward the ladies. They were at the further end of the room, quite out of earshot. A gleam of something like emotion passed over the Mephistophelean visage of the business manager, as his gaze reverted to Miss Floyd.

"The girl is pretty," he said, in a voice that was somehow changed, "and she carries herself like a princess. She has that polished insolence that is found often in the highest ranks. She will mature into a handsome woman. You will be proud of her, Mr. Moer: you will be good to her? Somehow, I feel as if I ought to exact some pledge from you that you will be very tender of her, and very gentle to her."

"I will give the pledge of my own free will. I will be good to her. It's to my interest to be so, don't you see, for she will hold the purse strings when she becomes Baroness Waldemar. Our tastes are much alike. She likes show; so do I. She is fond of gayety, of attending balls, of spending money; so am I. Your anxiety for your employer's granddaughter does you credit, Grimrod, only I never suspected you of being devoted to my uncle's interest with such entirety and disinterestedness as you have lately displayed. You seem to be transferring that devotion to Hilda, and you do well. She will requite your goodness in due time."

"I don't doubt it. She is a perfect Floyd, Mr. Moer, pure, innocent and beautiful. She does not know anything of your past," said Grimrod. "Of course I heard of your taking that actress abroad with you years ago, and actually introducing her as your wife, keeping up the deception even after it was discovered, and I have heard of your engagements to various ladies, but these things are best concealed from Miss Floyd. I fancy she would incline to jealousy if she were to suspect that she is not your first choice. I believe that her marriage to you will be of benefit to you both. It would certainly seem right that Lord Waldemar's nephew and granddaughter should share the grandeurs which the one has been led to expect and the other inherits by right."

Further discussion was prevented by the entrance of Lord Waldemar. Immediately thereafter dinner was announced. The Baron gave his arm to his granddaughter, Moer escorted Mrs. Watchley, and Grimrod brought up the rear. In this order they descended to the dining-room.

The usual elaborate dinner was served in the usual stately fashion. The ladies returned to the drawing-room, while the gentlemen lingered over the wine. The latter at length came up also to the drawing-room, and Lord Waldemar seated himself, with a glance at the little porcelain clock on the mantel.

"I have to go to the House by ten," he observed, "to vote upon a question in which I am interested. In the morning I have an engagement to attend Lady Thaxter and her guest to a flower show at Chiswick. So I may as well say to you, Hilda, what I intended to say to you in private. Lady Thaxter has recommended to me to-day a French gentleman who has met with a reverse of fortune, and is obliged to instruct pupils in his own language. He is a refugee, one of the old régime of the Faubourg St. Germain, venerable and noble. I have dropped him a note, soliciting him to receive you as one of his pupils, and I desire Mrs. Watchley to receive him with all courtesy when he calls to-morrow, apologize for my absence, and make arrangements on his own terms for your instruction."

Mrs. Watchley bowed assent.

Miss Floyd's brows contracted and darkened ominously. She tapped her foot upon the carpet in a restless fashion, and a mutinous look gathered in her blue eyes. Mrs. Watchley, who knew her so well, trembled with anxiety, lest she should give expression to a burst of passionate anger.

"Hum!" said the young lady. "Suppose I don't choose to take lessons of this poky old Frenchman, then what?"

Lord Waldemar looked surprised, as did his business manager. Moer smiled under his mustaches.

"Of course you are solicitous to improve in necessary accomplishments, Hilda," said the Baron mildly. "Lady Thaxter has kindly relieved me of the burden of finding masters for you. I had intended to place the matter in Grimrod's hands, but Lady Thaxter begged to be allowed to select your teachers, and she has done so, altogether to my satisfaction."

"Lady Thaxter is very officious," said Miss Floyd, tapping her foot yet more restlessly. "Has she selected more teachers for me?"

"Yes, a teacher of dancing and deportment, one who is noted for imparting an air of finish to his pupils, her ladyship tells me," replied the Baron, "and also a teacher of drawing and painting. These are all."

"They are quite enough," frowned Miss Floyd. "They will keep me at lessons all the time. This horrid Signor who teaches me music is absolutely insufferable. How can I endure the 'venerable' Frenchman, the dancing-master, the drawing teacher? I am no school-girl to be kept under masters in this manner. I am seventeen years old, and I demand to see something of the world, not to be treated like a child of ten. I have had lessons all my life. If this is the way you intend to treat me, I might better have staid at Innsbruck. I had more freedom there, and could do as I like. It's a pity, grandpapa, that you can't find somebody else to tyrannize over."

"Hilda!" exclaimed Lord Waldemar, in stern rebuke.

"Hilda!" cried Mrs. Watchley imploringly.

"It's true," said Miss Floyd, her anger overflowing bounds under the excitement of this slight check. "I won't learn these lessons, so there!"

"You will study under these teachers, Miss Floyd," said the Baron sternly, with that haughty anger which those who knew him always feared and dreaded. "I am your guardian, and you must render me obedience in these things which are manifestly for your good. If you decline to obey me, I shall send you to a boarding-school, where you will remain for the next three years. You are unformed in many respects, and must have one year of patient application to study before appearing in society. If you knew me better, you would hardly dare contest my will in this matter."

Miss Floyd had been petted and spoiled all her life, and had never known what it was to submit to another's will, and the restraint Lord Waldemar was endeavoring to place upon her simply infuriated her beyond all power of self-control. Driven on by her own headstrong recklessness, she exclaimed:

"Oh, I know you well enough by reputation. You are only an unreasonable, tyrannical old man—"

"Hilda!" cried Mrs. Watchley again, in an agony.

"Miss Floyd!" ejaculated Grimrod warningly.

The girl looked at the pair in defiance, resuming:

"You are in your dotage, my lord, if you fancy that I shall yield to these demands. I will not. I am made of different stuff to poor papa, whom you drove out to die in poverty in a foreign land, just because he chose to have a will of his own instead of submitting to your unreasonable tyranny. You killed him, and you killed his young wife, just because she happened to be the daughter of a man you hated. I wonder my father and mother don't haunt you at night. I presume Squire Arlyn was every whit as good as you, and that you were only envious and jealous of him. I dare say I am the first person who ever dared speak plainly to your High Mightiness, but I am not afraid of you, nor awed by you. For once in your life you have heard the truth."

She paused from sheer breathlessness.

Mrs. Watchley was crying aloud, and imploring the Baron to pay no heed to these "childish ravings."

Grimrod sat as impassive as if frozen in his chair. But there was a look in his inscrutable eyes that was terrible.

Darrel Moer was simply thunderstruck at the boldness and unreasoning fury of the heiress.

Lord Waldemar rose up white and stern, as he had looked upon that night when he had expelled his only son from his house and heart. His proud lips trembled under his frost-white mustache, but the glitter of his terrible eyes was like lightning, cold and hard and keen.

"Have you finished?" he inquired, with singular calmness.

A species of awe began to creep over the willful girl. There was that in the Baron's looks and manner, in his very quietness, that frightened her. She began to repent her folly, and nodded assentingly to his inquiry.

"If you have finished, then permit me to say," remarked his lordship, "that you have just committed a fault which in another person I would never pardon. You are only a spoiled, selfish, headstrong girl, impatient of restraint, regardless of right or principle. Your strictures upon my treatment of your father evidence a state of mind on your part which it is well I should know. I have but one word to say. You will not intrude upon my sight in this room, nor in the dining-room, nor in the library, until you come to me humbly and beg my pardon for what you have said. When you shall have done that, I will consider what is best to be done with you. You have this evening displayed qualities of mind and heart which render the very sight of you obnoxious to me. Whether I shall ever overlook your wicked insolence, I cannot tell."

"I don't care whether you do or not," muttered Miss Floyd, with a flash of expiring fury. "I shall never ask your pardon—never!"

Lord Waldemar moved slowly toward the door, in silence. Grimrod followed him into the deserted hall, and clasped his hand in deep emotion, exclaiming:

"Oh, my lord! my lord! she is but a child—an angry, thoughtless child. Forgive her."

"It is for her to solicit forgiveness, Grimrod," said his lordship with a strange gentleness. "My dear old friend, you feel for my disappointment, I see. I am disappointed. It is hard to see one's race run out. Don't speak to me. I cannot bear it. I must be by myself."

The Baron went to his own room and locked himself in. Grimrod returned to the drawing-room, where Mrs. Watchley was heaping reproaches upon her charge.

"You are the most foolish girl living," sobbed the elder lady. "Why should you fly out so at his lordship about teachers and lessons when you are going to be married to-morrow? You could have assented pleasantly. You may be sure that after the announcement of your marriage, he would not wish you to take lessons."

"I spoke so because his words made me cross," said the girl sullenly. "I forgot for the first minute after he spoke that I was to be married to-morrow, and the next minute I didn't care for anything except to tell him what I thought of him. If he had treated me differently, and given in to all I wanted, perhaps I would have changed my mind about marrying Darrel Moer. I've felt that way several times this evening. But now my mind is made up beyond all power to change it. I'll marry Mr. Moer, and then tell grandpapa what I think of him. I may as well finish what I have begun."

"I'm afraid you've made a great mistake, Hilda," said Moer. "My uncle is not a man to bear what you have said. He can't leave his property away from you, but he can keep you out of every penny of it while he lives. I was shocked—horrified."

He walked the floor in his excitement.

Grimrod came near to the heiress, and his evil eyes blazed into hers with an expression that made her shrink back from him in fear and trembling.

"When you go to your rooms to-night," he hissed in her ears, unheard by Darrel Moer, "leave your door unlocked, and wait for my coming. I have that to say to you that you must hear—a communication which I had thought never to make to you, but which I must make to-night!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE.

When Hannibal Hamlin was installed as Collector at Boston, he found, as collectors had found in all times before him, an avalanche of applications for office in the Custom-house. The hardest thing for Han. Hamlin to do is to say "*No*" to a friend,—a genial, fun-loving, big-hearted man, he is never so well contented as when able to make all happy and contented about him,—and when he found scores of applications for every place he had to give, he was excessively fretted.

One day, John Pullman, a quiet, unobtrusive young man, with bang-up recommendation, and who had done his share of work at primary political meetings, ventured to call upon the Collector to know if his application for an office could not be favorably considered. He was a good accountant, a ready penman, clear headed in business, and numerous responsible men had avouched for his honor and integrity.

"The only place possibly vacant," said the Collector, "is not a first-class office. If you thought that worth your acceptance, I might give it to you."

Pullman thankfully nodded, and signified that he would accept.

"But," said Hamlin, with a comical leer, "I don't like to be making frequent changes. If you take this place, do you think you will stick?"

"If the duty is within the scope of my ability—yes, sir."

Hamlin wrote the oft-repeated note to the store-keeper, and the youth took it, and went his way.

Now John Pullman had expected a clerkship worth at least twelve hundred dollars per annum, and he was not a little taken aback when he discovered that he had been only appointed a "Light Weight Mover," upon a salary of seven hundred and fifty dollars. In short, his position was among those unkempt sons of toil who trundle barrows, and are ycleped "laborers."

But John Pullman was not to be so easily crushed out. He scratched his head, and meditated. He saw the point at once.

"Has this place been tendered to anybody before me?" he asked.

"Yes," answered the Colonel. "A dozen, at least, have looked at it, and let it drop, within two weeks."

"Very well," said Pullman, shutting his mouth hard, "we'll see! I told the Collector I'd stick, and I will. He won't get rid of me in that way."

"Then you'll go at work?"

"Yes."

The Colonel liked the young man's grit, and was inclined to favor him; yet John Pullman pulled off his coat of broadcloth and went at work. He took a barrow, and made a turn around the store-room. During the remainder of that day he made himself generally useful, and on the following morning he was at his post in due season.

At the expiration of about a month, as Jack Pullman stood at the window of the office of the Delivery Clerk, he saw the Collector coming across the street from the Custom-house.

"Good-morning, Mr. Hamlin!"

Hamlin stopped, and beheld a young man in his shirt sleeves, with a barrow, and on the barrow a bale of goods; and the young man was nodding and smiling in a friendly, cheerful way.

Han. Hamlin never forgets a face, nor is he apt to forget a name which he has once heard. He recognized the youth, and smiled back.

"Pullman, is this you?"

"Yes, sir," said the light weight mover, dropping the barrow, and taking the Collector's extended hand. "You didn't expect to find me here?"

"Well—no,—I hardly thought you would stick."

"But I have, sir; and I hope, if I stick long enough, I may *take root and grow*."

Hamlin laughed heartily, and a few moments later he was in close confab with the Store-keeper.

That was on Wednesday. On the following Monday morning John Pullman received a note from the Collector informing him that he had been appointed to a responsible and important clerkship.

S. C., JR.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1872.

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ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

FANNY FERN.

FANNY FERN was born in Portland, Me., in the year 1811. Her maiden name was SARA PAYSON WILLIS. Her father was NATHANIEL WILLIS, the founder of the *Puritan Recorder*, of Boston, to which city he removed while his subsequently famous daughter was yet a little girl. Her mother was a lady of superior intellect and great warmth of affection, and was much beloved by her children.

FANNY FERN was a sister of N. P. WILLIS, the poet. Her early life was not marked by any extraordinary vicissitudes, but flowed on in the usually equable channels which characterized the girlhood of the daughters of pious New England families, in the generation which is now fast passing away. She grew to womanhood in Boston. In her twenty-third year she married CHARLES ELDREDGE, the cashier of the Merchants' Bank in that city. Mr. ELDREDGE was a gentleman of culture and taste. He lived close up to his income, and when, in 1846, he died, after a short illness, he left his widow, with two children, in exceedingly straitened circumstances.

Then came bitter days. Poverty and disappointment enveloped the widow and her little ones, as in a mantle of despair. Mrs. ELDREDGE tried to earn a support for herself and her children with her needle; in fact, and in brief, she tried nearly all the means to which poor mothers are driven to earn honest bread for their hungry offspring, and was equally unsuccessful in all her efforts. At last, in her fortieth year, she tried writing for the papers, over the signature of FANNY FERN. Her success was immediate as to popularity, but slow as to pecuniary reward. It was not the fashion, in those days, to pay much for literary work of any kind. For a long column of her sparkling little articles she got only the meagre pittance of two dollars. As it sometimes took five of her articles to make a column, that was only forty cents apiece for them! But she wrote on and on, with constantly increasing reputation and popularity. Her success was assured, because she had something to say, and knew how to say it. She was, in fact, an embodiment of American womanhood giving the world a piece of its mind, and the world was glad to get it. The country press hailed her advent with delight, and copied her pieces with enthusiastic compliments.

Who *is* FANNY FERN? began to be the question of the day. The secret of her identity was so well guarded that the most inquisitive could not get track of her, and the myriad suppositions, guesses, announcements, denials and discussions which were published on the subject, greatly enhanced the public interest in the inexplicable literary phenomenon that was winning the hearts and captivating the admiration of all classes from one end of the land to the other.

Such prodigious talent as FANNY FERN exhibited in every piece she wrote could not, of course, go unrewarded forever. Publishers began to compete for her pen; she had offers to bring out her fugitive pieces in a volume; she found friendly and sagacious advisers; and the general result was that by the close of the year 1853 she had accumulated the sum of ten thousand dollars, and was receiving a handsome remuneration for her newspaper articles.

FANNY FERN was also a religious woman. She believed in all that is good and pure and holy, and detested whatever is evil and impure and unholy. She was utterly devoid of snobbery or pretentiousness, and loved to be in sympathy with the poor and humble. She was brave and true and honest and faithful to her very heart's core; and it was the influence of these personal qualities, expressed through her genius, which gave such an attractive flavor to her writings. With all her intellect and genius, had there not been added to these her courage, her honesty of purpose, and her faithfulness of heart, she would not have been FANNY FERN.

FANNY FERN'S first book, *Fern Leaves*, was published in June, 1853, and had a sale of over ninety thousand copies. Her next volume was a juvenile, entitled, *Little Ferns for Fanny's Little Friends*. This was published in December, 1853, and had a very large sale. In May, 1854, she brought out her second series of *Fern Leaves*, which was followed by *Ruth Hall* and *Rose Clark*. All three of these works sold largely, and added much to the fortune of the now prosperous authoress.

In the spring and summer of 1855, FANNY FERN wrote her famous hundred-dollar-a-column story for the New York *Ledger*. In January, 1856, she became a permanent contributor to the *Ledger*, her connection with which was only dissolved by her death. She wrote up to the last week but one of her life.

In contemplating the literary career of this distinguished authoress, one naturally seeks to penetrate the secret of its success. This is not a difficult thing to do. The secret of FANNY FERN'S success is to be found in her admirable common-sense, her perennial cheerfulness of heart, and her downright earnestness of purpose. She was one of the most humorous and witty of writers, but her humor and wit were never wasted in purposeless display. She always took aim at something that deserved to be hit, and wrote on subjects in which the great honest masses of the people were interested.

During the many years of FANNY FERN'S connection with the *Ledger*, she was in the frequent habit of addressing notes to us. We append a few brief extracts from these, illustrative of her different moods of feeling and thought.

In one of her earliest letters, she makes the following touching reference to her mother:

"Nobody can tell the longing I have for *my mother*, although I am a grandmother myself. *She*, and *one other*, are the only human beings who ever *thoroughly* understood me. Ah, that *own* mother! There is nothing like *that*, this side Heaven."

The fixed purpose of her life, to accomplish some good, she often gave expression to, as in the following:

"I really *do* desire to do *some good* with what influence I have. If I know myself, that is my *first* wish."

In the subjoined extract from a letter written in the country she playfully takes off her husband's mode of driving a horse:

"His driving, I must say, is not up to his biographical exploits, for when he isn't *doing an article* in his head with the reins in his fingers, he is playing with Effie, oblivious that a team is coming, or that there is a corner to turn, or a guide-board to inspect—hence my bargain with the stage-driver for a horse that *knows the road!*"

She thus refers to some criticism that had been made on one of her own articles in the *Ledger*:

"The article on 'Farmers' Wives,' which she alludes to, I wrote to *defend* them. It was a plea to farmers not to *overwork* them for the sake of gain. She has quite *misinterpreted* it. As to Henry Ward Beecher, I shall shoulder none of *his* sins! I enjoy having either *him* or *you* attacked, as your opponents are sure to go limping home!"

In a note from Old Orchard Beach, she encloses a sarcastic paragraph about herself cut from the *Advance*—a nominally religious but an unprincipled paper published in Chicago—and says:

"Think of the impudence of the Editor *in sending me his paper, unsolicited, for a year, containing every now and then some attack on me like the above!*"

The depth of her religious feeling is shown in the following:

"DEAR BONNER: I only wish you had heard Dr. Hall at Cooper Institute last evening. His sermon was so appropriate, so *wise* for the occasion, so tender and loving, and at the same time so strong and so bold.

"Now, while I sat listening, I said to myself: This man does not belong to those rich Christians in Fifth Avenue, not even though —— be one! No! His place, by right of his being able to say to just that floating audience just the right thing, in his own magnetic, convincing manner, is in a great *Spurgeon Tabernacle*, preaching to just such persons.

"Oh, how I wished it could be! as I looked at the eager faces of those men, young and old, who had come out that inclement night to listen to him. I not only went out to do it, but went *alone* and came home alone, and considered myself well rewarded. Yours truly and always,

"FANNY FERN."

One of her letters has the following postscript:

"If this is written so badly that you can't read it, know that while writing it I have talked to my cook about dinner, and washed Effie's face and hands, and mended a hole in her stocking, that she might go with a neighbor who came for her. Don't you wish you were a woman?"

She was keenly appreciative of any little act of unexpected kindness, and most profuse as well as hearty in her expression of thanks, as may be gathered from the following:

"BROOKLYN, Sept. 14, 1856.

"MR. BONNER—*Dear Sir*: Thank you! Your note made my eyes swim. I know no other man who would have done so liberal and generous an action, and done it so delicately. You have added a warmth to my heart, and a point to my pen, which time can neither blunt nor chill, as my column in the *Ledger* shall show.

"Yours, FANNY FERN."

In the same spirit, fourteen years afterward, she writes:

"JAN. 25, 1870.

"MY DEAR BONNER: How did you know that I was blue and discouraged, and had been crying all day because there was so much in the future to do, and I had so little strength left to do it? I am so *very down* when I *am* down! It was just one of your felicitous impulses to *feel* that I was blue without *knowing* it. Thank you for the gift and the generosity that prompts it.

"Yours, FANNY FERN."

Fanny Fern's Last Words.

"It will soon be over," were the dying words of FANNY FERN.

It will soon be over—how soon, indeed, will it be over—with all of us!

Men no longer live to the age of the patriarchs; only one person in a hundred, it is said, attains the age at which FANNY FERN died; and yet how youthful she seemed!

It will be over soon. But when it is over, it will be well if it can be truthfully said of us, that we were always as thoughtful of those by whom we were surrounded as FANNY FERN was of her little granddaughter, when, the evening of her death, she said to her husband, "Put her to bed early, and if I die in the night, don't wake her, to tell her, before morning."

A Simple Invention Greatly Needed.

In cities, towns and large villages, coal gas is almost the only material employed for lighting purposes. But in country houses, and with the great majority of the inhabitants of the United States, kerosene, or some kind of refined coal oil, is used. Coal gas is too expensive, unless manufactured on a large scale. And, indeed, the coal oil is but little inferior in quality, and furnishes a splendid light compared with anything known and in general use before its discovery.

But there is one difficulty, almost universally experienced, in burning coal oil. If the wick is turned up a little too high it emits a black, suffocating smoke, discoloring the lamp chimney so as to render it opaque, and covering the ceiling above with lamp-black. And this results from the slightest degree of carelessness in adjusting the wick. Not one person in a hundred is sufficiently careful always to avoid it.

What is needed is some simple contrivance which will arrest the screw when the wick is turned high enough to burn, and before it is high enough to smoke.

Cannot somebody among our million and one inventors devise such a contrivance?

TEMPERATE ZONES.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

The fullest and best life must be sought in the Temperate Zones. Cold and heat, in excess, are alike, in shutting men up and reducing their power over nature. The action of nature upon the human organization, and of man upon nature, constitute the business of life.

When the elements are in such extremes of power as to limit men's action, they diminish the force and productiveness of man. The arctic region shuts one up for more than half the year in a prison of ice more relentless than stone and iron. The size of the world to a Greenlander, is the size of his underground home.

The tropics are to be chosen rather. But the fierce sun debilitates, and drives men out of more than half the hours of the day.

This restriction of activity, however, is not so much to be deplored as the limitation of enjoyment through the senses and the taste. There is, to be sure, a prodigality in nature under the Equator which, for a time, surprises. But the eternal summer takes away from men those alternations, opposites and transitions which are the occasion of so much pleasure. The things which we become used to cease to have the effect which their first presentation wrought. A tropical forest, when first seen—its richness in vegetation, its enormous growths, its amazing varieties—fills the soul with wonder. But seen year after year, one becomes used to it. Great is great by contrast. Where there are no contrasts, one ceases to feel the greatness of common things. When one first moves into a large house from a small one, every room seems immense. But after some years the sense of largeness is gone. We have accommodated ourselves to the new measure, and are no longer impressed with size. If one were to live twenty years among the great trees of California, he would not be likely to lose his enjoyment in them, but it would be wholly different from that which one feels at first. It is probable that other things would seem small by their side; but the giant trees would cease to be great, in the sense in which they first appeared so; the size would accommodate itself to their measure.

It is change that keeps alive the sense of magnitude. It is small things that make things large, and large things that make others small.

Summer would not be half so sweet if there was nothing but summer. It is the winter that makes the summer wonderful. November days extinguish all the brightness of leaf and flower. The earth, like an anchorite, is clothed in sackcloth. The snowy days that follow robe the earth in white, as if shrouding it for burial. The myriad forms of vegetation are gone. The infinite gradations of color are wiped out. The eye cools. We change the earth, the air, the water. Nature turns her coat inside out. The mother of all beauty, lavish in her abundant wealth, sits grim and bowed, as if a stingy economy had come with old-age. For a time we are sad. We look out pitifully, after each frost, upon our favorite greens and blooms, as we would go out after a battle to see who of friends was safe, and who lay slain or wounded. At length comes the lock that will not be opened. The soil is hard as stone. We no longer look for life. We grow used to death. Other pleasures spring up. We are comforted with new things. We grow used to them.

But at last we are weary of winter. A strange blood seems beating in our veins. We turn from the white snow and the gray earth with longing discontent. The signs come of a change in the moods of Nature. All these agitations within us are but a participation in the changes going on in the air, in trees, in soil and stone. There is universal travail.

Then come the birds—soon after pioneering grass, and the first flowers. Things break forth, and all nature is in haste. The world awakes as a strong man from dreams. Every day sees new wonders; every hour has its surprise. The senses are not dull nor clogged with an incessant luxury. They have been upon a long fast. Every flower now is a thrill. We go joyously into summer, and every day is a new leaf in an unopened book, and gratification follows expectation with every turn.

Let others have the Equator; give me the Temperate Zones! And if any of my readers shall say this is true, not of outward nature alone, but of human conditions in life, and that neither extremes of poverty nor excessive wealth are to be chosen, but that temperate zone of affairs, midway between the golden Equator and the barren Poles, I shall not resist the application. Only it was said long ago, "Give me neither poverty nor riches."

Abstracting Freight from Railroad Cars—A Year's Imprisonment for Stealing Three Oysters.

People who are in the habit of sending large quantities of freight by railroad, in this country, know that the loss in the course of transit amounts to a pretty large item. Particularly is this the case in regard to grain, fruit, and such other articles as can be easily stolen in small quantities, and the theft of which it is difficult to trace out so as to bring the culprits to conviction and punishment.

The head of a barrel of apples will be stove in, and a peck or two taken out; half a dozen bags of grain will be found untied, and several quarts of grain abstracted from every one. Of course some of the agents or hands on the road have committed the depredation; but who is ever going to take the time and trouble to follow it up, and undertake the next to impossible task of sending the guilty party to jail? So the robbery is submitted to, although it is constantly felt to be not only a loss, but an annoyance.

The Great Eastern Railway Company, in England, have undertaken to put a stop to this species of crime on their line. A sergeant of police, in the employ of the company, noticed one of its porters leaving a truck loaded with oysters, about three o'clock in the morning. He arrested the man, and on searching his person found *two oysters*, while a third had been dropped near the track. The thief was convicted, and sentenced to *twelve months'* imprisonment, with hard labor.

A Heartless Suggestion.

Violet ink is found to fade soon after its use. A San Francisco merchant filled up some certificates of stock with it, and placed them in a window. One sunshiny afternoon he noticed that every trace of the figures and dates had disappeared. A commentator on this occurrence—some frigid old bachelor, we presume—suggests that for love-letters this liability to fade would be no objection to the ink!

A Man Aged One Hundred and Eighteen—His Youngest Child Seventy-five.

[From the Nashville (Tenn.) Union.]

Thomas Pinion, of Montgomery county, said to be one hundred and eighteen years of age, and a soldier of the First Revolution, arrived here yesterday for the purpose of drawing his pension. He came in a wagon, accompanied by two sons and two daughters, the youngest of his children being seventy-five years of age.

A LEGEND OF THE DELAWARES.

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

The air is dark with cloud on cloud,
And through the leaden-colored mass,
With thunder-crashes quick and loud,
A thousand shafts of lightning pass.

And to and fro they glance and go,
Or, darting downward, smite the ground.
What phantom arms are those that throw
The shower of fiery arrows round?

A louder crash! a mighty oak
Is smitten from that stormy sky.
The stem is shattered by the stroke;
Around its root the branches lie.

Fresh breathes the wind; the storm is o'er;
The piles of mist are swept away,
And from the opening sky, once more,
Streams gloriously the golden day.

A dusky hunter of the wild
Is passing near, and stops to see
The wreck of splintered branches piled
About the root of that huge tree.

Lo, quaintly shaped and fairly strung,
Wrought by what hand he cannot know,
On that drenched pile of boughs among
The splinters lies a polished bow.

He lifts it up; the drops that hang
On its smooth surface slide away.
He tries the string; no sharper twang
Was ever heard on battle day.

Homeward Onetho bears the prize.
Who meets him as he turns to go?
An aged chief with keen quick eyes,
And bending frame and locks of snow.

"See what I bring, my father, see
This goodly bow which I have found
Beneath a thunder-riven tree,
Dropped with the lightning to the ground."

"Beware, my son, it is not well,"
The white-haired chieftain makes reply,
"That we who in the forest dwell
Should wield the weapons of the sky.

"Lay back that weapon in its place;
Let those who bore it bear it still,
Lest thou displease the ghostly race
That float in mist from hill to hill."

"My father, I will only try
How well it sends a shaft, and then
This goodly bow shall surely lie
Among the splintered boughs again."

So to the hunting-ground he hies,
To chase till eve the forest game,
And not a single arrow flies
From that good bow with erring aim.

And then he deems that they who swim
In trains of mist the middle air,
Perchance have kindly thoughts of him,
And dropped the bow for him to bear.

He bears it from that day, and soon
Becomes the mark of every eye,
And wins renown with every moon
That fills its circle in the sky.

None strike so surely in the chase;
None bring such trophies from the fight,
And at the council-fire his place
Is with the wise and men of might.

And far across the land is spread
Among the hunter-tribes his fame.
Men name the bowyer-chief with dread,
Whose arrows never miss their aim.

See next his broad-roofed cabin rise
On a smooth river's pleasant side;
And she who has the brightest eyes
Of all the tribe becomes his bride.

A year has passed; the forest sleeps
In early autumn's sultry glow;
Onetho, on the mountain steeps,
Is hunting with that trusty bow.

But they who by the river dwell,
See the dun vapors thickening o'er
Long mountain ridge and severing dell,
And hear the thunder's sullen roar.

Still darker grows the gathering cloud,
From which the booming thunders sound,
And stoops and hangs a shadowy shroud
Above Onetho's hunting-ground.

There they who, from the river-vale,
Are gazing on the distant storm,
See, in the mists that ride the gale,
Dim shadows of the human form.

Tall warriors, plumed, with streaming hair,
And lifted arms that bear the bow,
And send athwart the murky air
The arrowy lightnings to and fro.

Loud is the tumult of an hour—
Crash of torn boughs and howl of blast,
And thunder-peal and pelting shower,
And then the storm is overpast.

Where is Onetho? What delays
His coming? Why should he remain
Among the plashy woodland ways,
Swoln brooks, and boughs that drip with rain?

He comes not; and the younger men
Go forth to search the forest round;
They track him to a mountain glen,
And find him lifeless on the ground.

The goodly bow that was his pride
Is gone, but there the arrows lie;
And now they know the death he died,
Slain by the lightnings of the sky.

They bear him thence, in awe and fear,
Back to the vale with stealthy tread.
There silently, from far and near,
The warriors gather round the dead.

But in their homes the women bide,
And sit unseen and weep apart;
And, in her bower, Onetho's bride
Is sobbing with a broken heart.

They lay in earth their bowyer-chief,
And at his side their hands bestow
His dreaded battle-axe and sheaf
Of arrows, but without a bow.

"Too soon he died; it is not well,"
The old men whisper, standing nigh,
"That we who in the forest dwell
Should wield the weapons of the sky."

The Dying Words of Mr. Seward.

It is a striking coincidence that the most emphatic and oft-repeated of the dying words of our great statesman, Mr. SEWARD, was the translation into English of the motto of his native State, which he had served with so much distinction as Governor and United States Senator. *Excelsior* is our motto. Its translation is *higher*. "Higher, *higher*," exclaimed the expiring statesman, as he became less and less able to breathe in an incumbent position; and as his anxious attendants lifted him up, he became easier.

It is true, the words as used, had application only to his physical condition; as Mr. WEBSTER'S famous expression, "I am not yet dead," were spoken merely to reassure his heart-broken family, who stood around his bed, and whose sobbing told him, as he had closed his eyes in repose, that they apprehended it was the sleep of death.

Yet this circumstance does not deprive the incident of its poetic interest, when we consider not only his long and close identification with the State whose motto he was quoting, but more especially his greater distinction as the expounder and devotee of the doctrine of a "higher law."

A Snake Commits Suicide.

[From the Poughkeepsie (N. Y.) Press.]

On Sunday morning of last week, a hooded adder, of large size, was killed near the well on the premises of Mr. E. L. Wright, in Nyack, Rockland Co. These serpents are among the most poisonous of all the reptiles, and are of the same family and almost identical with the Cobra de Capello of India. On the continent of America they are met with on the dry and arid plains of Texas and along the Mexican coast, but are exceedingly rare this side of the Mississippi river. After having been wounded, this adder, finding that he could not escape, reared his head about a foot from the ground, inflated his hood enormously and then struck his fangs into his own body three times in rapid succession, and in less than five minutes he was perfectly dead and as rigid as a stick. Miss Jennie Wright came very near treading on him, and it was exceedingly fortunate that he did not strike. The fangs were five-eighths of an inch in length, and exceedingly sharp. The length of the reptile was about three feet, by three and a half inches in circumference; color, a tawny orange with strongly marked black rings. It is said that there is no antidote for their poison, and that death ensues in from thirty to forty minutes after having been bitten.

THE COUNTRY POST-OFFICE.

The country post-office is seldom, perhaps never, a building dedicated to letters, with Uncle Sam's initials on the outward wall.

The postmaster usually keeps "the store" as well, and regards the other little affair as a means of increasing his business—nothing more. When any one comes for a letter he will be apt to go away with sugar also. The salary of the position is not worth an office-seeker's struggles, as it is sometimes two dollars per annum, sometimes four. The letters are put away in a desk or box, if the postmaster is a very careful man; if not, he hunts them up when inquired for.

The official at my post-office—Frogland Station—is currently reported to have replied to Miss Sabina Smith's inquiry for a letter, by shouting into the back room:

"I say, wife, warn't that ere letter Baby was chawin' directed to Miss Sabina Smith?"

To which wife replied:

"Yes; I'll fetch it. I allow you'll have to dry it, Miss Smith, 'fore you kin read it. He's chawed the onvolop clar through."

This, however, is a strong case. Generally, by going for a letter to the Frogland Station, one would be apt to get it with the envelope unbroken.

What a gathering place the post-office is! Perched upon the barrels, or leaning on the counters, one may find all the idlers of the neighborhood; and here, too, about post hours, young farmers make their appearance, and, while talking of crops, anxiously watch the road down which some young female figure is pretty sure to come. No doubt many a proposal has been made on the way home from the post-office. If not, young farmers have no idea of what a good chance means. A long quiet road, no mortal in sight; trees waving overhead; a little brook rippling on one hand, on the other side the woods; the summer afternoon drawing to a close: all sweet things influencing her budding heart; and he "in his store clothes" and "a boughten hat," looking so well.

The question, practically interpreted, would be:

"After a few months of courting and kissing, will you wash, and scrub, and milk, and cook for me until you die of it?"

But why should the country girl do more than her city sisters? They see a bright picture, often quite unreal, through the magic circle of the marriage ring, and so does she, of course.

Perhaps Frogland Station is not the place, but it might have been, where a letter directed to "Mother," and nothing more, lay so long, mystifying the postmaster, until an old woman hobbled in one morning and asked for "a letter from my son, what's at sea," when the epistle being handed over, was found to have reached its destination.

Squire Schenck claims the big envelope with "Square skunk" upon it, as a matter of course; and Miss Anna Maria Moran does not feel surprised when an epistle is handed to her with this remarkable word upon it: "AnnermariahMurrian."

A letter is a letter when it comes to a country post-office, and it is not expected to be clean, or to be directed in any orthodox manner.

Letters addressed, "Polly Jenkins, or any of 'em if she's away," and "Helen Dibbins, forgetting her married name," were received without surprise.

One which bore the superscription, "Mr. Peter Parkins," remained for a long time unclaimed, until the postmaster remembered that that was *his own name*. He had been called "Uncle Pete" so long, that he had forgotten the fact entirely.

Yes, this [illegible] quaint, and strange, and simple, and without rules or order; but through it many a message of joy and sadness has passed—many a story of marriage and death. Hearts have beaten wildly on their way to that frame building perched, treeless, on a hill; and many a poor, quivering lip has been hardly able to form the words, "None for me yet?"

There come the cars, sweeping along the road with a great train of coal wagons, and one little passenger car for Frogland Station. There will be two or three letters handed over to the postmaster at most; but these may break hearts, or fill them with untold joy.

MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Cheap Preaching—Eighty Cents Apiece for Funeral Sermons.

[From the Providence (R. I.) Gazette.]

We have just been looking over a copy of the Cranston Tax Book for 1872, and have found appended to it the Report of the Overseer of the Poor of that town, for the year ending in April last. Among the expense entries the following one struck us as being quite extraordinary and peculiarly interesting:

"Cash paid for funeral sermons, $4.00."

Had the accomplished and evidently pious overseer stated anywhere in his report the number of pauper decedents at the Asylum, for the year, it would have been easy to get at the exact market value of a pauper funeral sermon in Cranston. But the number of decedents is not given by the worthy man. We learn from the report, however, that the average number of paupers, for the year, in the Asylum there, was 22; and judging from the percentage of deaths at the Dexter Asylum, where the average number of inmates for the year was 101, and the number of decedents 27, we should say that the decedents at the Cranston Asylum did not probably exceed five. This would give us the sum of eighty cents as the true market price of a funeral sermon for a pauper in Cranston—that is, if every deceased pauper there is honored with a funeral sermon.

A Fight with a Bear.

The following adventure with a bear is related by the *Omaha Dispatch*:

A citizen was returning home from a fishing expedition to the mountains, having with him a fine string of trout. On his way he saw a young bear, probably about half grown, coming toward him, and occupying the only path by which he could leave the place. The bear didn't seem very savage, and the man thought by giving him the fish he would be satisfied, and thus afford an opportunity to escape. He threw the fish; but there's where he made a mistake. Bruin mistook this act of kindness for an assault, and at once advanced upon the foe. Man and bear then grappled, the bear by some means getting the man's arm in his mouth; both tumbled to the ground, and after a short struggle, both hugging each other closely, rolled into the creek. This had the effect of separating them, and the man hastily climbed out of the stream and ran for life. The water doubtless cooled the bear's wrath, for he did not follow his enemy, going away in a different direction.

Pulling a Drowning Girl Out by Her Hair.

[From the Fishkill (N. Y.) Journal.]

On Monday last, at the bridge near the residence of Mr. L. E. Cotheal, in this village, a girl about fourteen years old, daughter of George L. Howe, and a boy of about the same age, named Brooks, from Newburgh, were fishing in the creek. The water is deep there, and the girl accidentally fell in. The boy was a short distance off, and hearing a splash in the water, hastened to the spot. He saw nothing but the long braid of her hair, which had arisen nearly to the surface of the water. Seizing this, he drew her up till he got hold of her arm. She came near pulling him in, and had she done so, both would have drowned together. The boy, however, caught hold of a small tree that was fortunately near, and with great presence of mind, held fast to the girl with the other hand. She was rescued in a considerably exhausted condition.

A Widower's Celebration.

[From the Poughkeepsie (N. Y.) Press.]

A widower observed the third anniversary of his wife's decease with a little supper the other night. The affair passed off in an agreeable manner, and the party separated at a late hour in the best of humor.

—Society seldom forgives those who discovered the emptiness of its pleasures, and who can live independent of it and them.

THE STAR OF LOVE.

BY FRANK J. OTTARSON.

'Tis night, my love! the stars are bright,
And cold the wild wind blows;
You pine beneath a tropic night—
I freeze in arctic snows;
A third of all the bulk of earth
Between us intervenes;
You keep the land that saw your birth,
I roam in foreign scenes.

But, love! you know the promise made,
The day our paths diverged,
That whether under sun or shade,
Or where the ocean surged,
At midnight on a single star
Our eager eyes would rest,
And then our hearts, however far,
Would seem together blest.

And not a night has passed away
But I that promise kept,
Looked for the Star of Love alway
Before my senses slept;
Though oft the envious clouds would come,
And muffle all the sky,
And leave within my silent home
A sense of misery.

Yet then I thought that over you
The sky was warm and clear,
And from the midnight concave blue
Stars lit the atmosphere;
That you could see, if I could not,
Our altar in the skies—
That pure imaginary spot
We sought for sacrifice.

Another year, my wandering o'er,
I'll seek my native land again;
I'll watch that Star on sea or shore,
And bid it guide me o'er the main;
Then by thy side, star-gazing still,
I'll sit till morning's golden dyes
Dims heaven's stars, and then my fill
Of stars will gather from your eyes.

The Plot Against Hawley;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," "MARK HEBER'S LUCK," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MR. AYMAR'S ESCAPE.

The pirates had scarcely left the Indiaman, when a long slender panel at the forward end of Mr. Aymar's state-room was drawn aside, disclosing a secret space some five feet wide and high, and having a depth of eighteen inches.

The wall, in fact, between Mr. Aymar's apartment and the one next adjoining was double, and a space of the size mentioned had been so cunningly secured between the two rooms that no one would have suspected its existence.

In this space, thus revealed by the sliding of a movable panel, was Mr. Aymar's money.

It was enveloped in stout canvas bags, just forty in number, and every bag contained not far from one hundred pounds of gold.

It was with a quick movement that the secret panel shot open, as the Malay Gunner and his men retreated to their own vessel, and it was with a similar quickness that the face of a man presented itself at the aperture, and that a pair of keen eyes looked out into the cabin.

This man was Mr. Aymar.

He was indeed aboard of the doomed Indiaman, as Capt. Graham, after abandoning the ship, had so regretfully discovered.

A few minutes previous to the departure of his friends, as narrated, the old East-Indian had retreated unobserved to his state-room, locking himself in.

"It's an awful risk," he had muttered, "but I will take my chances."

Concealing himself in the secret place which had been provided for his money, he had waited patiently during the long hours the pirates had devoted to their search—waited during all the noise and excitement of the scenes we have narrated, and until the retreat of the furious and disappointed horde of ruffians to their own vessel.

One brief but searching glance cast Mr. Aymar now around him, as he listened to the yells and cries of his enemies, and then he slipped nimbly through the panel-way, and drew his tall form erect, with a relief that so many hours of a cramped and confined posture rendered really delicious.

His face was a sight to look upon at that moment, it was so calm, so expressive of a quiet satisfaction.

"Yes, they're gone," he breathed, after another brief instant of listening. "My venture has turned out quite as well as I expected."

A second glance cast Mr. Aymar around him, as he stepped from his state-room, and now his gaze encountered the fire the retreating ruffians had so hastily kindled upon the floor of the cabin.

The fire was making rapid headway, but it was still small and circumscribed, and to extinguish it entirely with a blanket was the work of a moment.

The gloom—the darkness even—which instantly succeeded within the cabin, told Mr. Aymar that night was closing around him.

"So much the better," was his involuntary ejaculation. "I can get off unseen. Fortune has indeed favored me."

Taking his way quickly but cautiously to the deck, he crouched under the bulwarks a moment, and looked after the retreating pirates, whose schooner had already become a mere speck in the shadows with which it was being enshrouded.

Then he looked sharply along the deck of the Indiaman and into her hold.

Quivering with strange dips and reels, the ship lay wallowing upon the abysses ready to engulf her, like some dying monster in the last gasps of its agony.

The fires kindled in the hold and forecastle by the pirates were burning slowly, owing to the soaking everything had received from the rain, but the one started immediately beneath the main hatch was beginning to cast a ruddy glow between decks, and to even glare out feebly upon the night.

The flames were scarcely more vivid, however, than were the gleams of Mr. Aymar's eyes, as he noted the various features of the situation.

"There is time," was all his further comment.

Leaping to the smallest boat carried by the ship—the only boat now remaining, and the one of which he had spoken to Capt. Graham—he lowered it successfully to the water and made it fast to the bulwarks.

His next measure was to bring his gold from its concealment, and to stow it into the bottom of the boat.

A few minutes sufficed for this proceeding.

Next he secured a liberal supply of water and provisions, several blankets, a compass and other instruments, some clothing and a couple of trunks—in short, nearly all the effects he had brought aboard of the ship, and everything he was likely to need—and then he lowered himself into the frail craft, cast off the fastenings, and pulled clear of the vessel.

A series of dull explosive sounds, as of cannon fired under water, almost instantly succeeded.

The air between decks was bursting forth violently, through numerous cracks and seams, owing to the increasing pressure of the water into every nook and cranny of the ship.

Mr. Aymar comprehended that he had not taken his departure an instant too soon.

He was astonished, in fact, to see how low in the water the *Petrel* had already settled, and he realized that only the quietude of the sea had permitted her to remain afloat until this moment.

Pulling away rapidly—he cared not in what direction—until she had become a mere dark point in the midst of the darkness now enveloping the scene, Mr. Aymar rested upon his oars and waited for the inevitable catastrophe which was to crown the history of the noble Indiaman.

The fire beneath her main hatch was now streaming up sufficiently into the sky to indicate the ship's position, but not enough to reveal Mr. Aymar's presence.

Suddenly there was a loud bursting report—a staggering plunge—and the *Petrel* vanished for ever, leaving such a wild vortex upon the face of the deep that Mr. Aymar had a momentary fear of being drawn down into it, despite all his exertions.

But he finally steadied his boat, and looked around him.

He was alone upon the waters.

A shudder shook his frame as he realized his situation.

He was hundreds of miles from any land, in an open boat, without help, at night, and exposed to instant destruction.

The darkness around him was now so intense that he could not see his hand before his face, and it seemed all the deeper by contrast with the light proceeding so recently from the fated Indiaman.

Yet he smiled as he looked in the direction of his gold.

"At any rate the pirates will not have it," he ejaculated. "In that point at least I am triumphant."

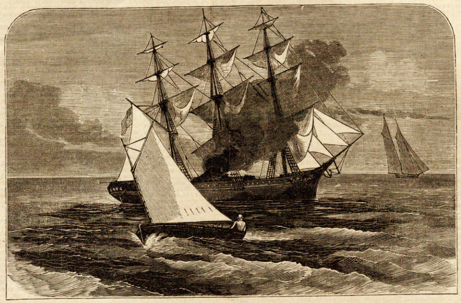
Debating within himself a few moments as to the conduct now devolving upon him, he wrapped himself up snugly in several of the blankets he had brought with him, and lay down to sleep, leaving his frail bark to the guidance of Him who rules the tempest.

The sun was just appearing above the horizon when Mr. Aymar awoke. The sky was cloudless and the sea calm, only a light breeze blowing. Not a sail was in sight.

With a heart full of gratitude, the lone navigator bathed his face and hands in the cool sea-water, and made a hasty breakfast.

Deliberating as to his course, he reached a conclusion just as his repast was finished.

To the south of him lay the great route of all American and English ships proceeding to and from the East Indies, their usual course being through the Straits of Sunda, and it seemed to Mr. Aymar, in his cheerful and hopeful mood, that he would have to stand away to the south-east only a few hours—or possibly a few days—to be seen and rescued by a passing vessel. He accordingly decided to cruise in that direction.



MR. AYMAR'S ESCAPE FROM THE PIRATES.

Setting his sail, he took his course from the sun, and seated himself at the tiller, and his little boat was soon skimming the sea like a bird, in a south-easterly direction.

The whole day long and nearly all night Mr. Aymar held to this course. Then he took a necessary repose of a few hours, which brought him to a new day. Again he made a hasty breakfast from his stores, and then he resumed his voyage to the south-east, with a favoring breeze that impelled him on his way faster than ever.

Day after day this cruise was continued, with very little to break its monotony. Twice the lone navigator saw a sail in the dim distance, and two or three times his boat was completely drenched by the showers of spray breaking over it while he slept, but otherwise there was little to break the anxious quest of his eyes by day and his equally anxious thoughts during the long hours of night.

A week had thus passed before Mr. Aymar conceived any particular anxiety. The weather continued fine, the winds favorable. There was a chill in the air, especially at night, but the old East-Indian was too preoccupied and too busy to mind it.

But at last he began to experience misgivings. He had advanced to the south and east hundreds of miles further than he would have dreamed of doing at the beginning of his lone voyage. One hope after another had led him on in that course, only to eventually forsake him. One idea after another had proved futile. He was now far to the southward of the wide pathway of the seas upon which he had counted so strongly. He was creeping up toward the Antarctic Circle, where every day's change of latitude made a perceptible difference in the temperature. And to give point to his misgivings, the increasing chilliness of the air had reminded him that winter was soon coming.

Under these circumstances, it was no wonder that Mr. Aymar grew uneasy. This uneasiness increased until his counsels were full of confusion. In his gathering desperation he finally turned back, or rather headed his course to the north. A glimpse of a ship to the southward, however, the following day, gave him such a shock of hopeful excitement that he continued sailing southward long after it had disappeared. During several other days he continued to sail wildly, now this way and now that, having a reason for his course at one time in an adverse wind, and at another in a fancied glimpse of a sail in the distance.

The twelfth night of this lone navigation set in more dismally than any of those preceding. The wind rose ominously. The sea began to get rough. The darkness was intense, neither moon nor stars being visible. Apparently a storm was gathering. The uneasiness of Mr. Aymar gave place to a positive foreboding of trouble. He knew that he had been favored with such a spell of weather as he could not reasonably hope for again during the fall months. He realized, indeed, that it was time for a gale, or at least for bad weather. Ere long his thoughts were so gloomy, and his anxieties so vivid, that all ideas of sleep for this night were banished from his mind. He resolved to stand on under easy sail before the wind, and watch for the blow that seemed about to fall upon him.

The night had thus advanced to near its middle, with constantly increasing signs and heralds of a storm, when a terrific crash suddenly startled Mr. Aymar from a doze, and he leaped to his feet, only to find that the boat had become stationary, and that the mast had broken short off near its foot, falling forward with its sail upon the object by which the progress of the boat had been so unexpectedly interrupted.

"An island, as true as I live!" cried Mr. Aymar, after a long investigation in the darkness. "I've run upon an island! But what is its nature? And where is it?"

The boat was not only wedged upon a mass of rocks, but a large hole had been stove in its bow, and it was already half full of water, so that Mr. Aymar lost no time in climbing out of it, and in removing to the strange shore all his effects, including his money. This task completed, he wrapped himself up in his blankets, and sat down upon the barren rock to await the coming of a new day, not daring to stir a step in the darkness. Several hours were thus anxiously and painfully passed, and then the morning light enabled him to look around him and see where he was.

To his intense astonishment, he found himself upon Amsterdam Island, one of the strangest islands in the world—an island of which he had read and heard a great deal in the course of his voyages in the Indian Ocean.

He recognized it at once from what he knew of its peculiar features.

It is four and a quarter miles in length by two and a half in breadth, and its highest peaks are elevated some seven hundred feet above the ocean. McCulloch's Dictionary speaks of it as follows:

"It is obviously of volcanic formation. A large portion is occupied by what has undoubtedly been a magnificent crater; but the sea having made an irruption into one of its sides, it is now converted into a circular harbor, the only accessible one in the island. The surface is everywhere light and spongy, and in parts burning hot. There are several hot springs, having temperatures varying from 80 degrees Fah. to the boiling point; with the exception of a single chalybeate spring, having a temperature of 112 degrees, all the springs in the island are brackish. Some of the hot springs are so near the water's edge, that it is no exaggeration to affirm that fish taken with the one hand may be boiled with the other! The surrounding seas swarm with various species of fish, particularly with crayfish. No trees, or other fruit-bearing plant, nor quadrupeds, nor land birds, are found on this island; but it is resorted to by vast numbers of sea birds. Seals and sea-lions abound on its shores and in the adjoining sea, which makes it be occasionally visited by ships engaged in the seal fishery."

Mr. Aymar had landed upon one of the two points at the mouth of the "circular harbor."

The wind had now increased to a gale, and was not only scattering showers of spray over the lone navigator, but was threatening to beat the boat to pieces, and wash away the provisions and other objects which had been removed to the shore. He lost not a moment, therefore, in dragging the boat entirely out of the water, and in securing all his effects under a sheltered cliff upon one of the innermost shores of the harbor. Here he determined to remain for the present, and as a furious storm had now begun to rage, and as he was terribly exhausted with all his late trials and fatigues, he wrapped up warmly and lay down to sleep in a nook of his sheltered cliff, and knew nothing more until the following morning.

For the next few days Mr. Aymar was busy with establishing himself upon the island. He repaired the injury to his boat, and took it to the shore whereon his secluded cliff was situated. He laid up front and side walls to his shelter, thus forming himself a snug dwelling. He varied his diet with the wild birds that occupied the island in such vast numbers. He caught a plenty of nice fish with such lines and hooks as he was able to improvise. The hot springs served him for a kitchen.

During the several days that the storm lasted, Mr. Aymar did not think of leaving the island, of course. And when at length the skies became bright and the seas tranquil, he was in no hurry to depart. It was not merely that his boat had received an injury that left it greatly weakened. There were other more potent reasons for his prolonged stay. He had become as weary of the sea as he was apprehensive of it. He knew that sealers visited the island sometimes, and it was not too late to hope for the arrival of a ship before winter. Besides, what course should he take, and what port was within reach, if he should resolve upon an early departure?

The need of rest, however, after his exposures and exertions, was the first consideration that influenced his conduct. No other idea was really pressing. True, he was anxious to reach America—doubly anxious to find his niece and her husband, and so relieve the anxiety he supposed them to be experiencing; but as his fretting could in no way expedite matters, he took the part of making the best of his misfortunes, and left his future action to be determined by the events that might occur from one day to another.

In this way the weeks lengthened into months, until winter was at hand. No ship came to the island, no sign of deliverance was given, not the least promise of help from the outside world reached the old East-Indian. The sudden arrival of winter put an end to all speculations as to his prospects and line of conduct, for it left him no other choice than to make himself as comfortable as possible where he was until the following spring.

That these long months of solitude were not without their consolations may well be believed. The fall of snow was light, the gales very few. The volcanic warmth of the island was kept up continually, affording numerous nooks where the solitary dweller was as comfortable and snug as if all the resources of civilization had been at his disposal. There was a certain charm too, after all his years of devotion to business, in being free from its pressure, in laying aside all responsibility other than that of his merely personal necessities, and in having time to consider more thoughtfully than ever before all the great realities and questions of existence.

But with the coming of spring the thoughts of Mr. Aymar all turned toward an early change in his situation. Possibly a ship might soon arrive, but should he wait for it? Would it not be better to put his boat into the best possible condition, and resume his cruise in her? The island afforded both water and provisions—such as they were—for a voyage of any reasonable duration. Could he not easily make the island of Desolation, where a whaler or other passing vessel was morally sure—from all he had heard—to come to his relief before summer was over?

Day after day all these questions pressed upon Mr. Aymar's mind, during the first few weeks of the spring, and gradually his inclination to resume his cruise became stronger. Ere long the only thought that deterred him from going was the possibility of a sealer's arrival at the island. But this hope naturally became weaker and weaker with the flight of time, and the summer had scarcely exhibited its first signs of promise before he decided to leave immediately, and chose a day for his departure.

"It is scarcely seven or eight hundred miles to Desolation," was the reflection that finally decided him. "I must have sailed the boat twice that distance in coming here. With the compass and other instruments at my disposal, I shall doubtless be able to make the island. And I am curious to see it, in addition to all the hopes of rescue it holds out to me. It was to the island of Desolation that the pirates took my fortune of ten years ago. Evidently I must push out of this—do something for myself—take some measures to end all these misfortunes, be that ending for good or for evil. Yes, I'll sail for Desolation, and I'll start at daylight to-morrow."

The morrow opened in a way to strengthen this resolution, the wind being fair, the sky nearly cloudless, and the sea as favorable as any one could wish it. With the first gleams of morning, therefore, Mr. Aymar took his departure from Amsterdam island and set his course as directly as possible for Desolation. Call it accident, call it providence, or what we will, the fact is none the less certain, that the old East-Indian was going the same way that all the leading personages of our narrative had taken before him—to the scene of Hawley's captivity—to the island of Desolation!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

STILL OTHER ARRIVALS.

Upon an outer point of the wild island of his captivity, in an attitude of profound dejection and misery, sat Will. Hawley, staring vacantly into the solitary scene around him.

The time was about the middle of the forenoon of the 26th of November, 1853.

Just a year had accordingly passed since his abandonment at Desolation.

He was greatly changed for the worse with his long captivity. His mental pains and anxieties, no less than his physical sufferings and privations, had told upon his young and hardy frame to such an extent that he was a mere shadow of his former self, as wasted in person as he was wretched in mind.

He was dressed entirely in sealskin, his other clothing having been worn out, but he had fitted his suit to himself very neatly, and it had at least the merit of being comfortable.

Upon a high bluff of the island, not far away from Will., sat another silent and drooping figure, which was equally haggard and wasted—that of Jude Breeling.

For the moment both of them were weary with conversing with each other—weary with the "hope deferred" they had so long cherished—weary with their speculations and consultations as to their future—and had strolled away from each other to indulge in their own gloomy thoughts and reflections.

Hawley had kept a careful record of the time he had spent in this dreadful captivity, and his eyes now filled with tears at the thought of an anniversary so gloomy, so disheartening.

"A year! and what a year!" issued hollowly from his lips. "I must not think of its horrors, and still less ask myself what has become of my poor wife during all these long months of misery, or I shall soon be as insane as was Jude."

The thoughts of Jude were equally gloomy.

"Five years and upward of this wretchedness," he groaned involuntarily, after a long and feverish survey seaward. "Will the end ever come? Shall I ever return to New York? Shall I ever see brother Tom again? It's little that we have been together, and little that he ever cared for me, but how I would like to see him! What joy it would be to get away from all these miseries!"

The train of thought thus reached was so exciting that Jude could not pursue it, or even remain motionless. Springing mechanically to his feet, he paced to and fro upon the lofty crests of the island, occasionally sending a swift glance out upon the waters.

As the day grew brighter and brighter, however, the two men became calmer and more hopeful; so naturally does the mind take upon itself the complexion of one's surroundings. They could not forget the great mercies already extended to them, in the visit of the *Thunderer*, in the annihilation of the runaways, and in the departure of Capt. Dougal to Australia in the man-of-war for the needed assistance.

Halting at length with startling abruptness, after a glance seaward, Jude fixed his gaze far out upon the waters.

"Can it be?" he murmured.

Some object which possessed for him the deepest fascination had evidently caught his attention.

"Can it be a ship at last?" he ejaculated breathlessly, after a long and steady look at the object in question. "I could almost swear to it, were it not so small. Can it be a bird, or the waves breaking upon some reef heretofore unnoticed? It must be a sail—or else there is a trace of my late illness hanging about me, and I'm being troubled again with all those horrible phantoms."

Dashing his hand across his eyes, as if to invoke all the powers of his vision, he steadied himself against a rock and took another long look seaward. During several moments his features worked convulsively, such was his eager anxiety, but at last his whole countenance brightened as if by magic, and the radiance of a joyous hope settled fixedly upon it.

"It's a sail, sure enough!" he decided excitedly, shifting his position. "I'm not mistaken. A ship is certainly approaching the island!"

Assuring himself by still another look seaward of the tangibility of the strange object, he began to scramble down the almost perpendicular face of the bluffs between him and Hawley, with a celerity which only long practice could have compassed.

"This way, Mr. Hawley!" he shouted, tossing his arms wildly. "I see a sail off Christmas Harbor!"

Will. leaped to his feet as if electrified, turning a startled glance upon his companion. His first thought was that Jude had again lost his reason.

"It's even so," declared Jude, reading the look Hawley gave him. "This is not one of my old notions. Come up here and see for yourself."

Will. sprang up the bluffs like a chamois, and was soon at the top of the bold cliff upon which Jude had halted to wait for him.

A single glance seaward of his practiced eyes caused a pallor like that of death to overspread Hawley's features.

"You are right," he murmured.

The glass belonging to Jude was instantly in requisition, and a few glances through it gave to Will.'s joyous astonishment a tinge of wonder.

"I make her out," he reported. "She's a boat, and no ship at all—a mere cockle-shell of a boat, not bigger than ours. I see only one man in her. He has luffed until his sail is fluttering, and is looking in this direction. He's evidently uncertain what point or harbor to make. How strange it is that such a mere cockle-shell should come here! Who can the man be? Why is he here?"

Jude could only echo these questions.

"In any case we have nothing to fear from him," resumed Hawley, after a further scrutiny of the stranger. "He's standing on again—yes, directly toward Christmas Harbor. His ship may have foundered, or he may be the victim of some wrong. Possibly he may be the very man that knocked me on the head a year ago, and who is changing his quarters to this side of the island. Whoever he may be, Jude, let's go and meet him. He cannot do us any harm, and it may be that he will do us a great deal of good."

Descending swiftly to the shore, the two men pushed off their boat and leaped into it, and were soon bounding toward the strange sail, in such a direction as to intercept it off the entrance of Christmas Harbor.

The discovery of this movement by the stranger evidently gave him a shock of surprise and apprehension, for he hove to abruptly, and seemed to hesitate between approaching the island and taking to flight.

The question was soon decided by the speed with which Will. and Jude neared him. He realized that he could not escape, if they chose to pursue him, and accordingly took the part of advancing boldly to meet them.

"He's surprised to see us here," said Will. "He has been told that the island is uninhabited. He is uncertain whether we shall prove to be friends or enemies. He comes from some shipwreck, in all likelihood. Certain it is that he is in a strait too desperate to admit of his hauling off shore. See! he's heading directly toward us."

"The Malay Gunner was coming here, you know, according to Bantam," suggested Jude, "but he'd hardly come in such shape as this."

"No—unless he has seen some such rough usage as his predecessors received ten years ago, or some such treatment as was dealt out to the runaways."

The boats nearing each other rapidly, Will. was soon able to make out the features of the stranger.

"He's an elderly gentleman," he announced. "Has the looks and bearing of an honest man. I dare say he's some commander whose ship has foundered at no great distance from the island. And yet—"

"There's no telling what he is," finished Jude, as Hawley hesitated. "We must wait."

In a few minutes more the two boats were near enough to exact the keenest attention of their respective occupants, and at last they arrived within hailing distance of each other.

Rising to his feet and raising his cap, Will. bowed to the unknown with the utmost politeness and respect, and his salutations were promptly reciprocated.

"You look to me like men of my own race and language," said the stranger. "Are you either English or American?"

"We are Americans!" replied Will.

"Thank God! My own nationality."

The voice with which this announcement was made was tremulous with joy and relief.

"I'll heave to," added the stranger.

He suited his action to the word, and Will. hastened to execute a like movement.

"He's somebody of consequence," Jude could not help saying, as he scanned the stranger more closely.

"Yes; and he has suffered some great misfortune," returned Will. "Do you not see how pale and thin he is? See how slowly and feebly he moves. He's been in some great trouble."

The hearts of the two men at once went out in sympathy to their unknown partner in wretchedness and suffering.

In a couple of minutes more the two boats lay nearly motionless upon the waters, and within a few rods of each other.

"I'd no idea of seeing any one here," said the new-comer, as he sank exhausted upon the seat in the stern of his boat, and applied his feeble strength to keeping the tiller in place. "Is not this island Desolation?"

"It is, sir."

"And is it not uninhabited?"

"As a rule—yes, quite uninhabited," replied Hawley. "But my friend and I have long been involuntary prisoners upon it; that is to say, we have been cast away here—at least my friend has—and have not yet been able to take our departure in a way and manner to suit us."

"I see! You, too, are in trouble. You, too, have been unfortunate," commented the stranger. "And you are Americans?"

"Yes, sir. We belong in New York."

"New York! The very port to which I was bound! Your name, sir?"

"My name is Hawley—"

"*Hawley!*"

The word fairly burst from the lips of the stranger, as he leaped excitedly to his feet—but only to sink back upon his seat as white as a sheet.

"Excuse me, Mr. Hawley," he said, in a barely audible voice. "Your name startled me. I was foolish for a moment. There is nothing in the coincidence. Your name is not William—not William Hawley, of course!"

It was now Will.'s turn to start in astonishment.

"But it is though!" he replied excitedly. "My name is precisely that, and nothing else."

"What! William Hawley?"

"Yes, sir. William Hawley!"

The stranger became if possible still whiter.

"Indeed!" he faltered gaspingly. "Are you married, Mr. Hawley?"

"I am, sir—"

"Your wife's maiden name?"

"Clara Aymar."

A partial echo of the name died away in the stranger's throat. His hands clutched the air as if he were suffocating.

"And—her father's name?" he managed to articulate in a whisper.

"Why, her father's name was Carmichael—Carmichael Aymar!"

The effect of these few words was startling.

The stranger leaped to his feet again, repeating the name of Mrs. Hawley's father, and then dropped back upon his seat, reeling and trembling, and the next instant sinking down unconscious upon the bottom of his boat.

"Look at that!" cried Hawley. "His strength has finally given out altogether. Quick, Jude! We must lay alongside. His boat'll be taken aback. Lively!"

Springing to their task, the two men brought their boat alongside of the stranger's, and hastened to meet the requirements of the moment. The boats were lashed together, their sails lowered, and then the unknown was taken in hand, his face bathed with salt water, his hands and wrists chafed, and his pale features fanned energetically.

It was several minutes, however, before the unknown gave any signs of life—so long that Will. had conceived the keenest anxieties concerning him—but at last he caught his breath sharply, after a sudden deluge of water upon his face from the hands of Jude, and in a couple of minutes more he came back to consciousness, with but few groans and other demonstrations of distress.

"It's my weakness—and excitement," he murmured apologetically. "I've had nothing to eat or drink in twenty-four hours. And then to learn who you are so suddenly—"

"Who I am?" returned Will. wonderingly. "Why, how does my identity concern you? And who are you?"

"You'd never guess who I am—meeting me in this way," replied the new-comer brokenly, as a sad smile commenced the illumination of his wan features. "You've no idea as to *who* I am, or *what* I am to you?"

"Not the least, I assure you. Who *can* you be?"

"Why, I'm your 'Uncle Tommy!'"

"My Uncle Tommy!"

"Your wife's uncle, you know! The only surviving brother of her father—"

"What! Thomas Aymar, of Calcutta?"

"The very man. I see your wife has talked to you about me. *Bravo!* A strange, but joyful meeting!"

The embraces, the hand-shakings, the joyful ejaculations—all the wild demonstrations of affection and esteem that succeeded, can be better imagined than described.

"But how does it happen that you come here in this strange situation?" asked Will., when at last he became calm enough for a coherent inquiry.

"I might retort with a similar question," replied Mr. Aymar, between smiles and tears. "But I will comply with the wish I read in your eyes, and tell you my story before asking for yours."

Mr. Aymar accordingly narrated how he had seen the marriage of his niece announced in a New York paper; how he had resolved to return to America; how he had written to Mrs. Hawley to announce his coming; how the *Petrel* had been chased and captured by pirates; how he had concealed himself and his treasure upon the Indiaman; how he had reached Amsterdam island and wintered there; and finally how he had extended his cruise to Desolation. The comments elicited by this exciting narration, not only from Hawley but from Jude Breeling, were too many to be placed upon record.

"And now for my story," said Will., when all the leading facts in the case of his uncle had been made known to him. "But first we'll set sail for the shore, as I see that we are drifting away from it every moment. If you'll take charge of our boat, Jude, I'll take charge of uncle's, and we'll talk as we go."

By the time, therefore, that the two boats reached Sentry-box island, Mr. Aymar was aware of all that had befallen Will. during the past few years, and especially of all that had befallen him during the long year of his captivity. He was also informed of the history of Jude Breeling, and of the still more wonderful facts relating to the recovery of the fortune which had been taken from Mr. Aymar ten years before, by the pirates.

"It's all strange enough—as strange as any romance," was the comment of the old East-Indian, as the boats reached the island, and the three men leaped ashore. "And it's all as joyful as it is strange. Let us hope that our joyful meeting, my dear nephew, is the commencement of a new order of things for both of us. Bring me something to eat and drink as soon as you can, for I find that all these long days and nights of misery have made me as feeble as a baby. I almost despaired of reaching the island, after finding myself in sight of it. But I shall soon be all right again, and then we'll bury my new fortune in the same place where you have hidden the old one, and thereupon settle down here to await whatever fate a kind Providence may have in store for us."

At this moment there came such a strange cry from the lips of Jude Breeling that his companions were both startled. He had turned his glance seaward for the first time in an hour, and now stood as if turned to stone, with his right hand and arm extended in an attitude of the profoundest astonishment.

"Look!" was all he could say, in answer to the mute appeal of Mr. Aymar and Hawley, as he pointed seaward.

"A sail!" cried the East-Indian, as soon as he turned his gaze in that direction.

"A clipper ship!" exclaimed Hawley. "And—yes—by heavens! how surprising!—she looks like my old ship—like the *Flying Childers!*"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE JUDGE'S SECOND WIFE.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

The wise people, those who manage their neighbors' affairs in theory much better than they do their own in practice, shook their heads in solemn conclave when Judge Hepworth married the second time; but an added shade of venom was in their counsels when the village paper noticed, in a flowery paragraph, the birth of a son and heir at the great house.

"Poor Clarice," they said, "has no chance now. It was bad enough when Judge Hepworth married a chit of a girl who, of course, cared for nothing but his money; but now there is a son, there is no hope for Clarice."

Crossing from the village high-road, and passing down a shady lane, with velvety grass on each side of the narrow foot-path, the traveller came upon the great house suddenly, as the trees parted at the end of the lane, and a tall iron gateway opened upon a broad avenue: the largest house within ten miles, surrounded by extensive grounds, and betokening wealth in itself and its surroundings.

When soft May blossoms were shedding fragrance through all nature, and spring's smiles were most radiant and winsome, a young fair woman, herself in the very springtime of life, yet having already taken the holy ties of wife and mother into her pure heart, knelt in one of the rooms of the great house—knelt to bring her beautiful face nearer to the cradle pillow upon which rested the soft cheek of her baby boy. As she bent over him, touching the tiny rings of his hair, kissing the dimpled fists and rosy toes, there arose in her heart a prayer:

"Oh, Heavenly Father, make me worthy of the happiness Thy hands have given me. Guide me, that I may lead the young life Thou hast trusted to my care to Thy throne. Grant that my boy may become noble, true and good as his father; and oh, make me more worthy of the treasure of his love. I am young and weak, but with Thy help I will try to be a true wife and companion to him. I can give him nothing in return for all he has given me but my love. Teach me, Heavenly Father, to be a good wife, and a good mother to his child."

And then, without words her heart swelled with deep gratitude and devotion. She had trodden always in lovely places. The child of wealthy parents, she had married the man she loved and who loved her, and had gone from one home of luxury to preside over another. She was very beautiful, and many had thought it a sacrifice when she married a man as old as her own father, yet in her sweet humility she only prayed to be worthy of the love bestowed upon her.

A low knock at the door roused her, and rising to her feet, she answered the summons. Upon the threshold stood a woman, a few years older than herself, who led by the hand a handsome boy who had seen two summers only. The woman was poorly dressed, in shabby mourning, but the child wore dainty white garments, and a little straw hat rested jauntily upon his long light curls.

"Did you wish to see me?" Mrs. Hepworth asked, smiling upon the child.

"May I come in?" was the woman's question, in return.

"Certainly. Take the rocking-chair. You look tired."

The stranger accepted the chair, and looked sadly around the room.

"Everything is altered," she said, in a mournful voice. "Perhaps I had better have staid away. Mrs. Hepworth, you have heard of Clarice Manderson?"

"I have not," was the reply. "I am almost a stranger here. We have been in Europe ever since I was married, until a few months ago."

"And you never heard of me?" said the stranger, the tears rising in her eyes; "then my errand here is indeed hopeless. If in his new happiness as your husband my father never even spoke my name, it is useless to hope he will forgive me!"

"Your father! Judge Hepworth your father? He told me he had lost his only daughter."

"Not that I was dead. I was lost to him by my own disobedience. You love my father?"

Just a smile, proud, happy and tender, answered her.

"Then you will understand me," said Clarice, "when I tell you I loved my husband better than father, home, or duty. Father would not hear of our marriage, and sternly forbade me to speak to Lucien Manderson, assuring me that he was a fortune-hunter, a gambler, and unworthy of my love. I would not believe this. To me he was the noblest and best of men, and for him I left all, to fly secretly from home and father. I have been bitterly punished. When the letter imploring forgiveness was returned to me by my father, with a few brief words casting me from his heart and love, my husband proved what I had so fondly hoped was false. He had married the only child and presumed heiress of Judge Hepworth, the millionaire, and found himself burdened with a pennyless wife. I spare you the history of the four years of married misery that followed. Then my husband and eldest child died of contagious fever, three months later, on the very day this boy was born. I heard of my father's marriage. I returned here, hoping for pardon; but the great house was shut up, and my father away. When you came, I determined to make one more effort for forgiveness, hoping you would plead for me. I waited till mother love was wakened in your own heart, till the little one in the cradle was here, to move your pity for his sister. Oh, by your love for him, plead for me. Think if he was an outcast from his father's love, sorrowing and penitent, and begging of a stranger the gift of his birthright!"

The choking sobs would be suppressed no longer, and the speaker bent her face upon the shoulder of her own wondering child, and wept bitterly. Gentle hands lifted her head, and upon her pale, worn cheeks kisses soft as angels' blessings were silently pressed, while the tears of the young petted wife mingled with those of her step-daughter.

There was a moment of silence, and then Mrs. Hepworth spoke.

"If my prayers will keep you here, Clarice, you shall not leave your father's house again. Will you wait here? Judge Hepworth is in the library, and I will speak to him at once."

She waited a moment, then came again, smiling to the anxious group.

"Cheer up, Clarice," she said bravely; "what is your little boy's name?"

"Stephen. It was the name of my brother who died. My first boy was called for my father."

"Stephen," said Mrs. Hepworth, opening her arms, "come here, darling, and kiss your grandmother."

The child sprang at once to the lovely grandmother, kissing her again and again, and Clarice was cheated into a laugh, as she looked at the fair sweet face that mocked the venerable title.

Putting him into his mother's arms, the young wife lifted her own baby from its cradle and left the room.

In the darkly furnished library, where an air of scholarly seclusion mocked the May sunshine peeping in at the open windows, Judge Hepworth was reading a formidable looking volume, open upon the desk before him. He had been poring over the dry legal words, and making copious notes in a blank book beside him, for nearly two hours, when, leaning back in his arm-chair, he seemed still studying and pondering over his studies. Yet, if the Judge's real thoughts had been given to the air, they would have been found to have strayed from law and equity, and to be recalling baby faces and fair sweet mothers.

It was many long years since a loving woman had smiled when the brown-eyed lover of her choice had bent over her to thank her for his first-born, the boy who died when just stepping into manhood. Again a babe lay in his arms, a dark-eyed daughter. How he had loved her! What treasures of wealth he had heaped upon her from her very babyhood! How proud he had been of her rare, sweet beauty, of her talents, her glorious young voice! How anxiously he had educated her; how indulgent he had been to all her whims; and when she was left motherless, how faithfully he had tried to fill the place of both parents to her! And she had fled from him in the night, to follow the fortunes of an unprincipled scoundrel, not worthy to touch her hand. He knew nothing more. Sternly he had closed his heart to all tender emotions until Meta came to flood his life once more with hope and happiness. How lovely she was, and how tender and true! The son, the heir to his name, that he had never thought could return, lay in the cradle up stairs, and surely there was no happiness that was now denied him. Yet—yet those children of the dead mother haunted him strangely to-day: the boy he had buried, the girl he had lost.

A light step roused him from his reverie, and his wife stood before him. Over her morning dress of delicate rose color, that suited well her fresh young beauty, fell the long white robes of the infant she carried with all the pride of motherhood.

Her husband opened his arms to caress both, and laughed as he said:

"Oh, these mothers! Do you suppose, Madam, that babies are admitted into the sanctums of legal gentlemen?"

"I do," said the mother saucily, "if the legal gentlemen have the additional honor of being their papas."

"Honor! Listen to this most conceited of mothers, comparing legal honors with the ownership of little pink roly-polies like that!"

"Did you know, Harold," said Meta, her lip quivering slightly, as she felt the deep import of her words, "that this is my birthday, and you have given me no gift?"

"You are impatient, little wife," he answered, thinking of the costly bauble that was to come without fail by the noon train.

"But I would like to choose my own gift," she persisted.

"What can I give my rosebud that she has not already?"

"Does not your office include the power of pardon?" she asked, her sweet face paling with her earnestness.

"In a limited degree it does," he replied; "but, dear one, I should not like it to be known that I had shown leniency to a criminal upon your solicitation. You would be constantly annoyed by loving relatives of scamps and rogues, trying to move me to pity through your intercession."

"But this is not a case of roguery, Harold; only a true penitent: one who erred in extreme youth; was led from the path of duty by a love as warm and true as our own, but mistaken. Oh, dear husband, do you not know for whom I would plead? Cannot you guess for whom I would beg your pity and forgiveness?"

"Clarice?" he asked hoarsely; "who has told you of her?"

"She has come herself to seek your forgiveness."

"She is here?"

"Yes. You will forgive her? For the sake of our own boy, Harold, let this be a home for her and Stephen."

"Stephen!" cried the Judge, starting.

"Her son. Her husband is dead. She is widowed, poor and lonely. Let her return to your home and your love, Harold."

There was a moment of silence, and the mother softly carried the strong right hand of her husband in her own until it rested upon the head of the babe in her arms. He looked down then, and said:

"I will grant your birthday wish, Meta. Take me to Clarice."

With a tender, loving kiss upon the hand that still rested upon her child's head, Meta led the way back to her own pretty sitting-room, where Clarice waited the result of her errand.

She waited, with fast throbbing heart and trembling limbs, for the words that were to give her sorrowing, lonely heart peace and rest, or the stern mandate that would close the doors of home upon her and her boy for ever. Her gratitude could never fail, she felt sure, for the beautiful woman who had so lovingly undertaken the office of mediator in her behalf, and the tears rolled down her cheeks as she thought of the unselfish tenderness of her young step-mother. As she heard the steps coming across the wide hall toward the room where she was seated, her agitation became too great for patient waiting, and she stood up, holding her child by the hand, her breath coming in quick, panting sobs, her eyes dilated with suspense, and her whole figure quivering with intense emotion. It was this eager, flushed face that met the Judge's eye as he opened the door—the face of the child to whom he had given the entire strength of his love for years. He forgot her waywardness, her disobedience, and the six years of absence. He remembered only that she was his only daughter, the child of his dead Clarice, and he opened his arms, with a smile that carried love and forgiveness to the sore heart.

There was a glad cry of "Father! dear, dear father!" and they were folded fast in each other's arms, while Meta drew wondering Stephen into an inner room, and closed the door. Not even for her ears, she felt, were those first sacred words of reconciliation.

It was not for long that Stephen was withheld from his grandfather's kiss, for father and daughter alike turned again to the gentle influence that had united them once more.

The gossips are divided in their opinions as to the exact amount of hatred and jealousy existing between the young widowed daughter and the young wife at the great house, but it would be quite beyond the power of their narrow minds to understand such true sisterly love as exists between Clarice Manderson and Judge Hepworth's second wife.

A HORSE FOR A WIFE.

BY MRS. A. E. BARR.

Derring Tower is a fine old manor-house, standing on the cliffs which skirt the boundary line of the Atlantic Ocean, on the coast of Westmoreland. The family are undoubtedly a very ancient one, although they have somehow retained a wonderful faculty for renewing their youth, for a haler old gentleman than Sir John Derring, or a more beautiful [illegible] been hard to find in all the six counties. They were rich too, and riches are rather an uncommon accompaniment to undiluted Saxon genealogy. But I think the fresh strong breezes which they drank in from the sea on one side, and the mountains on the other, had kept the old blood fresh and full of vitality.

At any rate, the proprietors of Derring Tower, a quarter of a century ago, were in no respect behind the year of grace 1847, and the merry company who kept holiday there were well satisfied with their quarters. It was not winter time, but it was quite cold enough to make the fires which filled the great wide chimneys a necessity, as well as a delight, and the merry hunting-horns, in the chill, frosty mornings, the most inspiriting of music.

Three things the Baronet loved as his life: his daughter, his acres and his horses. The first was a beautiful and affectionate girl, just a little spoiled by unlimited power and unlimited petting, but, after all, no bad example of Tennyson's pretty picture:

> "A rose bud set with little willful thorns,
> And sweet as English airs could make her."

The party gathered at the old Tower this season was an unusually brilliant one, and there was an ample mixture of trim dark riding-habits among the resplendent scarlet coats and white cords of the more legitimate and *business-like* hunters.

Among these fair younger sisters of Diana, Kate Derring was acknowledged

> "Queen and huntress chaste and fair."

And when I have said that her riding was equal to the white Arabian she invariably mounted, I have paid her the highest possible praise. Whether it was the Arabian's fleetness, or her instinct in detecting at once the exact spot in an inclosure where a leap was the easiest, I know not; but at any rate, the white mare and her beautiful rider were leaders in every chase.

And so Kate, in virtue of her splendid riding and her splendid beauty, was this season the heroine of the county. I think she enjoyed it. What girl with the crown of perfect health and eighteen summers would not?

No one could say definitely who stood the highest in the little queen's grace. Some of her ladies in waiting decided for Antony Derwent, the boldest rider and the handsomest man within a circle of twenty miles. And in the field there seemed good reason for this opinion, for Antony's dark chestnut hunter was generally nearest of all to the white Arabian. But when Wilton carpets became the theatre of action instead of furze and plowed fields, and lamplight, music and conversation took the place of sunshine and the "view-halloo," then Gerald Yorke became the favorite.

I don't think that Kate herself quite knew her own heart. She constantly vibrated, as circumstances placed her lovers in the ascendant. In the field it was Antony; in the hall it was Gerald. Antony was splendid in appearance; Gerald was wonderful in knowledge; but it was neither physical nor mental advantages that finally decided the question.

A few days before Christmas a small party, including Kate and her two lovers, started early in the day for Dalton Hall. It was only a ride of ten miles, but as their object was to bring back pretty Alice Dalton for the Christmas feast, they anticipated some delay while she made the necessary preparations. Kate, in her dark blue habit and cap, with sparkling eyes, and color heightened by the keen fresh air, looked more than ordinarily lovely, and both men, by an almost simultaneous thought, determined that morning to obtain some sign of preference from her.

As she came through the hall, she stopped among a group of servants busily employed making wreaths and adornments of evergreens. After giving a few directions, she broke off a spray of mistletoe and passed it through the golden brooch that held the neat band of snowy linen at her throat. That spray of glossy leaves and white waxen berries became at once to both men the object of ambition.

Before they were half-way to Dalton, Antony, with all his soul in his eyes, and all his heart on his tongue, was begging for it. While he was pleading, Gerald rode up to her other side, and with impassioned grace and fervor pleaded against Antony and for Gerald. Kate, with a pretty consciousness of power, and by no means ignorant of the deeper meaning which both men attached to her gift, glanced from one eager face to the other with an uncertain and almost frightened look. Then shaking her bridle rein, she fled like the wind from both, sending back, however, this challenge:

"Whoever can catch my Arab wins my flower."

It was a race for a wife, and both men felt it to be so. Men can inspire horses, if they love them, and never did Antony's dearly prized animal respond more nobly to his entreaties. He settled quickly down into long swinging strides which fairly devoured the ground, and followed without the quiver of an eyelash wherever his master's destiny led the way.

Gerald rode a horse whose high temper hardly bore the whip and spur which urged him to his utmost speed. Yet it was evident, if he could control him, the unnatural excitement of the animal was expending itself in a gallop which was at once intensely furious and wonderfully fleet, and which Kate would not be able to endure long, even if her horse could.

At length they came to a long stretch of country at once hilly and rocky—such land as in the dialect of the county is called "scaurs" or "fells"—and very soon Kate's quick ear detected that only one horse was following her. Obedient to her slightest touch, the Arab gathered in her speed and faced her pursuers—pursuer I should say, for at the foot of the hill Antony's horse stood motionless, while his master was stooping with an air of such concern as had evidently for the moment quite obliterated the mistletoe spray.

As she turned, Gerald Yorke touched her bridle rein and passed her. When he was able to control his horse, he returned to claim, with bared head and glowing face, his reward. She handed it to him with such a careless manner and preoccupied face that he felt all the warmth and glow of his success suddenly fade away. Her eyes were full of a vague trouble, and she said:

"Let us return. Something is wrong with Mr. Derwent or his horse."

It was the horse. One of the round stones so abundant on the ground had got into its hoof and caused it to stumble. The animal had cut its knees, and seemed otherwise in great distress, and this, for Antony, ended at once the race, since it would have been impossible for him to buy his own happiness with any creature's agony. He looked gloomily at his successful rival, and sadly at Kate, and then said something in his horse's ear, to which it replied at once with a low, loving whinny.

"You see, Miss Derring, I love my horse. He has carried me since I was but a lad," said Antony, almost apologetically.

And Miss Derring nodded her head, and smiled at him in a way which made his heart beat quicker time than ever it had done before.

"What will you do?"

"Take him to the shepherd's shieling yonder, and send a groom for a surgeon. I am sure you will excuse me."

"I don't think I can." But the tone contradicted the words, and the glance into his handsome, anxious face said more than the tone.

Then she stooped and patted the suffering horse, and spoke gentle, pitying words to it; and after that the gleaming berries in Gerald's button-hole did not hurt Antony's eyes so badly.

By this time the rest of the party had joined them, and a groom was sent back for help, while the remainder of the ride to Dalton was finished in much soberer spirits. Gerald had won, but there was *no eclat* in his victory, and he felt almost afraid to wear his laurels. An inexplicable change in Kate, a tone, a look indefinable, had dug a gulf between them which he did not dare then to cross. He rode back to the Tower with Alice Dalton, who declared him to be "the most stupid of men," a verdict which Kate received with an understanding laugh, and a prophecy that Alice would reverse her verdict in less than a week.

Gerald Yorke, however, was no coward, and he found time, as Kate stood dreaming over the blazing fire, waiting for the summons to dinner, to renew the subject. With a woman's tact she pretended not to understand him.

"Did I not give you the mistletoe, Mr. Yorke? I was so confused and frightened when I saw Mr. Derwent unmounted; but I thought I gave it to you."

"Ah, but, Miss Derring, I thought—I hoped—I believed that the gift meant—in short—"

"In short, Mr. Yorke, I do not understand 'thoughts,' 'hopes,' 'beliefs,' or 'meanings.' I incurred the forfeiture of my pretty mistletoe branch, and I paid it, I believe."

"Certainly you gave me the branch, but—"

"Then we are quits, you know." And she smiled with such a pleasant, gay indifference that Gerald felt he had been as absolutely refused as if she had said the straightest, most unequivocal *No.*

Mr. Derwent's misfortune was the theme of the dinner table; for though the horse would probably not die, still its efficiency for the field was over; and there was a grave sorrow for his companion's fate in Antony's face which made him wonderfully handsome in Kate's eyes.

After dinner she proposed a game of chess, and purposely withdrew the table into one of the many cozy, quiet nooks with which the great old-fashioned parlors abounded. The first moves were very silent ones, and I am afraid were such as would have greatly irritated an enthusiastic player. Then Kate lifted the ivory knight, and turning it thoughtfully in her fingers, said:

"I am very sorry about your horse, Mr. Derwent."

"So am I," honestly replied Antony.

"But you can buy another."

"Money cannot buy love, Miss Derring, and 'Baldur' is the only creature in the world that honestly loves me."

"Are you sure of that?"

I do not know what there was in Kate's blushing face and soft brown eyes that fired Antony's heart with a new courage. He took up his pleading where Gerald had interrupted him in the morning, and Kate listened as girls listen whose hearts beat time and tune to every glowing sentence.

"But I have no more mistletoe, Mr. Derwent," she answered, with a sweet, shy glance into the honest blue eyes that faced her. "What will do in its place?"

"Nothing but yourself."

Kate was not astonished, and she did not pretend to be. Very still she sat for one moment, and then with a shy, loving confidence laid her hand in her lover's. There was no need of words. Antony was as well satisfied as if she had said the most unmistakable "Yes."

"Oh, Kate," he said, later on in the evening, "if you really love me now, how could you tease me as you did this morning?"

"Because I did not know that I loved you then. I never found it out until I saw you half crying over poor 'Baldur.' I was actually jealous of the dumb suffering creature, and envied it the love I was sure then you would never more give me. Gerald is wise and witty, and I like to hear him talk. You are very handsome—yes, you are—and I liked to have you love me, but it is *heart* that *wins heart;* and when I saw how tenderly you cared for your horse, I said to myself, 'Beauty and intellect are very well, but a great heart is far better.' And I think the man who is so merciful to his horse will hardly be unkind to his wife."

The answer Antony made was a promise—a promise never once broken, and the prettiest girl in the shire has been happy ever since under the loving protection of the truest and bravest and tenderest of hearts.

WHERE HE REPENTED.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

The room was still as death, except the low, mellow ticking of an ormolu clock on the mantel. In the sunny bay-window the creeping vines and vivid mosses grew and bloomed; in his gold-wired cage, the canary hung in the swing, silent and watchful; and directly before the cage Muriel Sanfield stood, with clasped hands, and white, contracted forehead.

Hers was a face that illy became such a terrible, silent storm of grief as was surging over it that moment. Hers was a face so habitually calm and pure, that any such tempestuous emotion lent an awful idea of suffering. She was not a young girl; Muriel Sanfield was twenty-four; and when a woman of her style and character is overcome with any passion, be it joy or sorrow, love or hate, it leaves indelible impress.

Now Muriel stood facing Leslie Walsingham, her lover, and the one man of many suitors she had ever loved. To him Muriel had poured out all her big, loving heart; in him all that was noble, refined, fascinating in herself found perfect mutuality; for him Muriel would have faced ten thousand deaths. It was little wonder that she loved him so. Leslie Walsingham was one of those men who are destined to be worshipped, to be obeyed; while Muriel's was an organization that must adore, and be commanded.

So almost perfect had been the four months of their engagement, that Muriel often wondered whether her happiness was the exception or the rule for the generality of women.

Then, like those doubly dangerous thunderbolts that flash down death from a cloudless sky, came a change. Muriel very innocently and accidentally offended Leslie Walsingham, and he refused her penitent apology, utterly scouted the idea that it was a mistake, and then, with all the iron will of such a man as he was, he had told her it must be all over with them after that.

And that was why Muriel Sanfield's face was so white and drawn, and her hands were clasping and unclasping in the torture she was undergoing.

"Leslie, you never will be so cruel to me! Leslie, I am so sorry—I am *so* sorry I have vexed you! Won't you forgive me?"

She reached out both her cold hands in entreating pitifulness. He drew sternly back.

"Muriel, my word is law. I never can trust you again, and I never will marry a woman unless I trust her."

He had a splendid voice, deep, clear, without being loud, a voice that matched his fair, jetty bearded face, clear, questioning blue eyes, and proud—yes, it was a stubborn mouth; and Muriel, whose soul had been so entranced erstwhile, when she listened to the love words that his handsome lips had framed, now felt a terrible soul sinking. Leslie Walsingham would abide by his word, at all risks. She sank wearily down in the arm-chair near her, and turned her pale, pleading face toward him.

"I am afraid this will come home to you one day, Leslie; then you will know how I suffer."

She was very gentle, very sweet in her utter despair of happiness, and even his hard, obstinate nature felt a pang of compunction.

"You knew my opinion on certain subjects, Muriel, and yet you deliberately ran contrary to it. Why need we discuss what is irrevocable? What need to add another pain to a painful parting? Muriel, for ever, good-bye!"

And he went out in his own quiet, deliberate way, a very rock of adamant.

Like a blighted lily, Muriel sat where he left her; where, in his strength and wilfulness, he had robbed her of what was better than life—happiness.

A massive walnut bedstead, against whose carved head-board leaned large square pillows, that were daintily ruffled and braided; soft velvet carpet on the floor, that [illegible] all the noises of footsteps; darkened windows that *just barely* admitted a light draft of the morning air; and, sitting in an invalid's chair, pallid as a ghost, and wearing a worn, weary look in his eyes, was Leslie Walsingham.

But it was not all illness that had made such ravages, severe as had been his struggle for life. It was not the weary fatigue of convalescence that made him so restless and silent; and Leslie Walsingham alone, of all the world, knew why it was so.

Only that very morning had he learned what, at first, he refused to believe—what his heart would not let him believe: that he owed his life, not so much to his three skillful physicians, as to a faithful woman who had bravely come to nurse him through the contagious illness from which even his own sisters fled affrighted.

And the silent gentle woman who had nursed him, who had fought beside him for every inch of ground the demon fever had gained, to whom he owed his life, under God—was Muriel Sanfield.

At first he refused to credit the truth, simply because he wanted to discredit it; then, when he reluctantly admitted it, that terrible pride and will of his came boldly up and strove to quench the fires of gratitude. Then came the fight for the mastery, and for days the conflict lasted; the while he was moody and silent, or restless and cross. And after that, like oil on troubled waters, Muriel Sanfield and love won the day.

Leslie Walsingham was happier then than he had been since he refused Muriel's sweet overtures for forgiveness a year ago. A year ago! a year since he had seen her, and he wondered how he had lived without her. But now, when the scales were fallen from his eyes, he saw his folly—and he longed to fly to her and beg her pardon on his knees.

He recovered strength rapidly from the moment of that resolution, and a fortnight later he had his carriage at the door, to go to Muriel and begin anew their old time love.

How he loved her, with a love born of penitence! how he would cherish her all the days of his life, his own sweet, forgiving Muriel!

He knew just what he would do when she came in the parlor to meet him, in wide-eyed surprise. He would take her up in his arms and kiss her, and whisper such love words as he knew would heal the breach; and then they would sit down and talk, and she should promise to marry him soon, *very* soon.

His eyes were tender with his sweet thoughts, and his face was fairly radiant, as he descended from the carriage and up the old familiar steps.

The door was open—the evening was warm—and a dim light shone through the parlor door.

He would steal in and surprise darling Muriel when she came down, for of course she was up stairs dressing.

So he walked softly in across the dim room.

Was it any wonder his heart sprang to his throat with a bound that sent him reeling several steps? Was it surprising that a cold perspiration streamed from every pore of his skin? For there, just under the dim burning gas jet, was Muriel Sanfield—lying white, and wan, and peaceful in her coffin.

Leslie staggered to a sofa, the strong sobs bursting from his lips in unrestrainable agony. He smelt the fragrance of the geranium and tuberoses that lay around her—his dead. He wondered what it all meant, and prayed that it might be but a horrid nightmare.

But it was all too true; there she was, still forever: her sweet mouth he had so often kissed, and—what caused a keener pang—those lips that had pleaded so pitifully and so unsuccessfully.

It *was* coming home to him with a force he could scarcely bear; that cruelty he had meted to her was being measured to the full for himself. Ah, how little he had thought where and when he would repent! as little as any of us think when we sin, who are as apt to repent over our dead as was he.

Then, while Leslie Walsingham stood there, there came in two old women to look at the dead; and then he learned that Muriel had contracted the fever that she had helped save him from, and died of it.

It was the last blow he was to receive. He went away a stricken man, who never mingled among the merry and gay again. And sweet Muriel sleeps under the daisies.

REFLECTION.

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

You are true to your looking-glass, pretty maid,
And your glass is true to you,
For it gives back your golden wealth of hair,
And your eyes of tender blue.

To you it will prove a faithful friend
From now till the day you die—
Will give you a picture for every hour;
Aye, whether you laugh or cry.

Should a wrinkle creep to your snowy brow,
Or the silver thread your hair,
You have only to go to your trusty glass
To see it mirrored there.

And every shadow of grief and joy,
As every womanly grace,
Will find a double reflected there
On its clear and shining face.

Should passion transform your features fair,
Or should sin distort, alas!
You may see what you 'll take for a demon face
In the depths of your looking-glass;

Or the face of a saint that will brighter grow
As the measured days go by;
For your glass will prove a faithful friend
From now till the day you die.

* * *

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LIII.

ON THE TRAIL.

Like one walking in a dream, Raymond went out, followed by old Gumbo. In ten minutes he returned, haggard, overcome by the horror that loomed before him.

"Sit down," said his mother, "and face the position like a man, my son. That girl is certainly Hetty Blake; I am as sure of it now as old Gumbo can be; and it is for you to seek Estelle Landry, and bring her home. Go to New Orleans on the first boat that passes down the river; consult with Herbert Spencer, and then set out for the North to find out for yourself what has become of Estelle. Let me tell you all that has happened at Le Bocage since that creature took possession there, and you will understand why I give implicit credence to Gumbo's statements."

Raymond made a gesture of assent, and Mrs. De Lorme went on to relate the expulsion of Zulieme, and the vague doubts which then arose in her mind, the loss of the diamonds at the time of Macon's visit, and the strange caprice to send Zelma away with him.

As she spoke, the young man recalled the loss of the ring, and the artful excuse given for it, and he felt almost convinced that he had been duped. He sat with bowed head and heaving bosom, unable to speak. At last he roused himself, took from his pocket the ring given him by Hester, and bitterly said:

"That is the substitute *she* gave me for our family ring, and when I detected the difference, and discovered the initials of Hester Blake and her lover on the inside, she accounted for the exchange so plausibly that I believed her."

Mrs. De Lorme, glancing at the letters, said:

"This will furnish you with a valid excuse. Say to Hetty that I refuse to permit the marriage to take place without the ancestral ring, and that you have set out in pursuit of it, to return as soon as you have regained it, to claim her hand."

"Thank you, mother. I see no other course open to me, and I will avail myself of that excuse for my sudden departure, poor as it seems. Let us retire now. It is long past midnight, and I feel as if I must be alone to think over what we have heard, and determine on my final course."

Raymond took the candle his mother lighted for him, and left the room, but no slumber came to him that night. It was nearly two o'clock when he retired, and at dawn he was up again, making arrangements for his immediate departure.

He shrank from the thought of seeing Hester again till his doubts were resolved, and he wrote a few hurried lines to her, stating his mother's prohibition of their public union till the crusader's ring was recovered, as all the traditions of his father's family pointed to disaster and doom to the elder son who failed to place this amulet on the finger of the wife he wedded. Raymond declared that he felt bound to go in search of it, and he asked her to furnish him with the address of Mrs. Blake, that he might return her daughter's ring and claim the one belonging to himself.

The note was sent over to Le Bocage soon after daylight, and the feelings of Hester may be better imagined than described, when she was aroused from a pleasant dream to read its contents. For a few moments she was tempted to throw up the game she had thus far so successfully played, but the image of Raymond arose before her in all his frank, manly beauty, and she vowed to herself that she would not give him up without one more struggle to retain the hold she had over him.

She arose, threw on her dressing robe, and wrote a few lines expressing tender regret, but submitting to his decision as a good wife should. She gave the address of Mrs. Blake, as furnished by Macon, at the lonely house in the vicinity of New York, and bade him God speed on his errand.

Another letter was then rapidly written to her mother, in which she sketched the programme to be carried out when De Lorme arrived, and demanded the ring; and with a man of his impulsive and generous temper, Hester believed that all doubts could be easily set at rest, if Mrs. Blake performed the part assigned her with her usual tact.

Raymond received the note before breakfast, and its frank and affectionate tenor again caused him to waver in his belief that its writer could be guilty of the deep treachery of which she was accused. But his course had been determined on, and at the appointed time he took the steamer and went on his way to find the solution to the terrible mystery that had so suddenly invaded his sunny life.

We pass over the incidents of the journey to New Orleans, the tortures suffered by De Lorme, and the amazement, doubt and even anger of Herbert Spencer when he heard Raymond's story. But the exhibition of Macon's and Hester's betrothal ring, and the exposure of Hester's duplicity in regard to it, at last convinced Herbert that she was an impostor. Marion, of course, readily believed the pretended Estelle to be Hetty Blake, and zealously seconded Raymond in his determination to unmask her and find his own beloved wife.

Herbert telegraphed to Gibbs, the detective, to hunt down Mrs. Blake, and also to keep a look-out for the arrival of Zulieme and her son, and to take them in charge when they arrived. Raymond then took a swift steamer, the *Sultana*, for Cincinnati, whence he would go to New York by railroad, where he hoped to arrive in advance of the brig in which Zulieme had embarked.

On the fifth afternoon the *Sultana* reached Louisville, and an hour later Raymond was on board the night packet bound for Cincinnati. He expected to reach that city in time to take the morning train for New York, and in two days more he would be at the end of his terrible journey.

He was about to go in to his state-room, when the steamer whistled and rounded to at a wood-yard on the Indiana shore, and a voice close beside him said:

"We shall soon pass the wreck of the Greenwood. It was but half a mile above here that she exploded. I was aboard of her."

The name of the steamer on which Macon had lost his life aroused De Lorme from his apathy, and he turned to the speaker, a short, thick-set man, with a shrewd but good-humored face, and asked:

"Can you tell me anything of a man named Macon, who got on board the Greenwood with a negro girl at a plantation in Louisiana? The papers reported both as lost, and I shall be glad to hear something further about them."

"The papers ain't up to everything. The man was drowned sure enough, because he didn't know how to swim, and I saw him go down myself. Sarved him right too, for he kept that poor darkie locked up in one of the rooms, with a pair of saddle-bags of his 'n, to keep guard over 'em, I suppose. I kicked the door in myself, and told her to hold on to me, and I 'd save her. But afore she 'd come with me, don't you think she grabbed them bags, and made me take 'em along too? I got 'em both ashore safe, and she 's in that house up yonder with the bags, and she won't allow any one to open 'em to see what 's in 'em."

Raymond listened to this statement with breathless interest. He hurriedly said:

"This negro girl is known to me. You don't know what a service you have unconsciously rendered me, sir. Will you go with me on shore, and show me the shortest way to the house, for I must have speech with this poor creature."

"You look like a honest youngster, and I believe you don't mean any harm to the gal; so here goes."

The stranger dived down the stairs, followed by Raymond, and after ascertaining that the steamer would be detained at least twenty minutes longer, the two commenced ascending the steep bank toward a small cottage which stood but a few yards from its edge.

The door of the house was open, and the glare of a bright fire shone on two figures standing on a small platform in front of it. One of these was a sallow-faced woman in a limp calico dress and faded shawl, and the other was a slender negro girl, with a tattered cloth cape wrapped around her. Her face had a startled, wild expression, but Raymond knew her to be Zelma as soon as his eyes fell upon her. Stepping hastily forward, he lifted his cap that she might see his face, and said:

"Don't you know me, Zelma? I have come to take you away with me, and restore you to your friends."

The girl sprang forward, fell at his feet, and clung to them, as she cried out:

"Oh, Marse Ray, is it you?—'deed *is* it you, come to find poor Zell, when I thought nobody 'd ever look arter me agin? I 's got 'em safe, Marse Ray—dem shiny stones what Hetty Blake gin to Dr. Makin; and now you is here, all 's safe."

Paying no attention to the exclamations of the woman with whom Zelma had found refuge, Raymond simply thrust a roll of bank-notes into her hand, took Zelma's saddle-bags, and followed by the girl and Snyder—the stranger—hastened to the boat, which they reached as the plank was being hauled in.

Unwilling to exhibit Zelma in her tattered condition, Raymond requested Snyder to go to his state-room, the number of which he gave him, and unbolt the door which opened upon the guard.

When the poor creature found herself in safety she wept hysterically, and for many moments was incapable of giving a connected account of the circumstances that had led to her banishment from Le Bocage. But when she could speak—when she described the interview between Macon and Hester Blake, and told all that followed it, her pale listener felt that a special providence had sent him to find her, and set all his doubts at rest concerning the identity of the specious pretender who called herself Estelle Landry.

He gathered from Zelma's statements that at the time of Macon's visit to Le Bocage his fair bride was still living, and he felt the renewed hope that he should be in time to save her from her enemies.

On opening the carpet-bag the diamonds were found safe in the box in which they had been placed. Having satisfied himself of this, Raymond then went in search of the chambermaid, and giving her money, requested her to take charge of Zelma till he reached Cincinnati, and to furnish her with a respectable suit of clothing from her own wardrobe, explaining at the same time how that of the girl had been lost.

The woman was interested, and promised to do all that was possible for her; and having thus provided for the girl's comfort, and cautioned her against referring to what she had told him that night, Raymond went in search of Snyder, who had promised to sit up for him in the gentlemen's saloon.

It was growing late, and the place was deserted, except by the man who awaited his appearance, and when De Lorme joined him, he said:

"So you 're come at last. I 've been a waitin' on you, hopin' that you 'd tell me what was in them ere bags that critter held on to like grim death. You 've found out, in course."

"Yes; I have seen the contents of the saddle-bags. The clothing in them was of course ruined; but I found something in them so valuable to a dear friend of mine, that I feel bound to pay you a handsome reward for enabling me to recover them, as well as for saving the life of that poor girl."

An arrangement was soon made that was satisfactory to Mr. Snyder, who was to take temporary charge of Zelma, and place her with respectable people in Cincinnati. The next morning Zelma submitted without reluctance to the transfer thus made, when she received the assurance from Raymond that he would return West as soon as possible, bringing with him her true mistress, if she was to be found on earth. His business with Snyder was arranged, and with renewed hope, he set out on the early morning train for New York.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE DISCOVERY.

When Raymond De Lorme reached his hotel, in New York, he found Gibbs on the watch for him, with news that almost filled him with despair.

The house occupied so brief a time by Mrs. Blake was shut up, and in spite of the detective's most strenuous efforts, he had, as yet, been unable to gain a clue to her present whereabouts. Dr. Presley had taken such good care to conceal all traces of her, for the purpose of baffling Macon on his return, that he was in danger of being missed by the one most interested in communicating with him.

"The *Eagle*," said Gibbs, "has been spoke at sea, and she will probably be in port before the day is over. I boarded the brig that brought the news, but I could learn nothing more about her."

Leaving Gibbs to watch the arrival of the *Eagle* and secure the safety of Zulieme and Gabriel, Raymond ordered a carriage to drive to Greenwood, with the full belief that he should there find a record of the burial of Estelle under the name of Hester Blake.

On reaching the gates of the cemetery, Raymond stopped a few moments to inquire if any one of the name of Hester Blake had been recently interred within its precincts. After some delay, the answer was given that the name of H. Blake was on the books, and the quarter in which the grave was to be found was indicated to the driver, who professed to be well acquainted with every portion of the cemetery.

Many persons were strolling through the grounds examining the sculptured monuments at their leisure, but Raymond gave no heed to these, till his eyes fell upon two figures walking slowly almost in a line with the carriage. The driver had checked his speed, and was looking anxiously around for the plain marble shaft which he had ascertained had been erected over the grave of the H. Blake who had been interred in Greenwood.

A girlish figure of medium height, dressed in deep mourning, walked in front, followed, a few paces behind, by a rather thick-set girl, with a vacant but good-humored face.

There was something strangely familiar to Raymond in the air and bearing of the young lady in black, and wild as the hope seemed to himself that this could be the being of whose grave he was in search, he called out to the driver:

"Open the door quick. I must speak to that lady before we go any further."

Agitated as his voice was, its tones struck familiarly on the ear which had learned to think them the music of her life, and the lady turned quickly, threw back her thick vail, and displayed the face Raymond believed shrouded in the grave.

It was indeed Estelle, more delicate, more spiritual than in other days, for she had not yet quite regained the bloom of her early years, though she was rapidly recovering from her long illness, and her mind had regained all its original clearness under the skillful treatment of Dr. Presley.

With a cry of rapture she sprang toward her lover, and was folded in his strong embrace without a word being spoken by either. Raymond was too much overcome by this sudden shock of joy to find words in which to express it, and Estelle was too happy to care to break the blissful silence that held them spellbound.

We draw a vail over the sacred joy of this meeting. The lovers soon entered the carriage and started for Estelle's residence. On the way they mutually informed each other of the vicissitudes which they had experienced, and Raymond learned that the H. Blake interred in Greenwood was Hester's mother. On arriving at the cottage, where they found Dr. Presley and Mrs. Muller, Raymond allowed no time to be wasted in idle talk, but as soon as courtesy would permit requested a private interview with the doctor.

When they were alone, Dr. Presley gave a clear statement to Raymond of all that had occurred at Blanton, and explained the means by which he had gained control of Miss Landry's fate, and eventually saved her life. He placed before the young man the letters which had been sent by Hester to her mother, and they laid bare all the turpitude of which she was ready to be guilty to secure a legal union with Raymond De Lorme, and the undisturbed possession of the fortune and position she had seized on.

These letters had been found among Mrs. Blake's papers, for she had so suddenly been struck with death that no time to destroy them was allowed her. On her tombstone might with propriety have been inscribed, "The way of transgressors is hard," for not a day of peace or hope had dawned for her since the one on which she tempted her daughter to embark upon the tortuous path which had brought death to her, and ruin to Hester. Presley ended by saying:

"Mrs. Blake kept herself in a half-dazed condition by the use of morphine, and I had little difficulty in managing her after she fell into my hands. She sent Macon south in the hope that her daughter would give up the marriage with you, and after securing the Landry diamonds, elope with him, and they would all go to Europe together. When the account of the explosion on the Ohio appeared in the papers, with Macon's name among the lost, there was every probability to her mind that Hester was his companion, and the shock killed her. She fell upon the floor, and in half an hour the rush of blood from her lungs suffocated her."

Among Mrs. Blake's papers was also found her bank-book, showing that thirty thousand dollars had been deposited to her credit in one of the principal banks in New York. This money Estelle claimed at a later day, and after setting aside the fifteen thousand dollars designed by her father as a portion for Hester, the balance she insisted on dividing equally between Presley and Mrs. Muller.

By this time the short winter day was coming to a close, and Dr. Presley went to New York to send a telegram to Herbert Spencer, and to help Gibbs look after Zulieme and her son.

The hours passed on, and it grew so late that Raymond began to think Presley would not return that night, when the gate was heard to open, and eager steps drew near the house.

"I hope that Mammy Zu, as I used to call her, is coming," exclaimed Estelle, starting up. "I have not seen her for years, but I shall know her, I am sure."

The next moment the door was thrown open, and Zulieme, looking thin and wasted from her former stately proportions, rushed to the feet of her foster-child, and sunk sobbing on the floor.

"I've found you, my own, own darlin'—and that gal is knowed to be where she 's no business to be. Oh, my pet, I have been so miserable! and now I am so happy that I feel as if I can never ask any more good fortune from the blessed Lord what always brings things round for the best, if we only have patience to wait on Him."

Estelle raised her from the floor, and gave her hands to the excited woman to be kissed and wept over, till Gabriel came forward, bowing respectfully, but with a beaming face.

"I is glad, Missy, to find de right mistis at las'; an' I is special glad that you knows *we* didn't take them ere things we was 'cused o' stealin'."

"It is all right now, Gabriel," said Estelle, shaking hands with him; "and all you and your mother have suffered in my cause shall be remembered by me with affectionate gratitude as long as I live."

Presley now came forward, followed by Mr. Gibbs, and from them Raymond learned that the *Eagle* had arrived in port at eight o'clock; the policeman, accompanied by the doctor, had boarded her at once, and inquired for the negroes, and had brought them as soon as possible to the cottage.

The next morning a telegram was dispatched to Snyder, requesting him to send Zelma to New York under the care of the conductor of the train, and to inform her that Gabriel should meet her on her arrival.

A few hours later a small bridal party issued from the church in which the marriage ceremony had been performed between the lovers, and stepping into a carriage that awaited them, Raymond De Lorme, his bride, and her dumb attendant, set out to take possession of the apartments which had been engaged for them at the hotel in New York.

A week from that time another wedding took place, for Gabriel and his cousin Zelma concluded to accept the freedom their young mistress offered them, and begin life together on the money given the bride by her mistress.

Zulieme refused to be left behind even with her son, and when the ship sailed out of the harbor with Raymond and his bride, she was with her mistress.

Eunice Barker also clung to Estelle, and went with her to her Southern home.

Dr. Presley was also induced to accompany them, and on his arrival he took charge of the two plantations as resident physician.

Mrs. Muller, quite satisfied with the munificent sum given her, returned to Hans, and excused her long absence by explaining to him that through her sagacity the treacherous plots of Mrs. Blake and her daughter had been circumvented.

CHAPTER LV.

HOW HESTER MET HER FATE.

On the day of his marriage Raymond wrote a long letter to his mother, circumstantially detailing all that had happened on this eventful journey, and laying down the programme he intended to follow with reference to Hester. She was to be kept in profound ignorance of all that could have given a premonitory warning of the mine about to explode beneath her feet, till she came to meet him on his return; then, in his own way, he would show her that all was known, and resistance to her fate useless.

De Lorme had written a few lines to Hester from Louisville, and from their tenor she thought herself safe to win in the hazardous game she was playing. After his meeting with Estelle, Raymond wrote again, but very briefly—merely stating that he had regained the ring, and within a month he would meet her at Le Bocage, where he preferred having their second nuptials celebrated.

Miss Lyman, with Clarice, had gone on a visit to Mrs. Spencer in New Orleans, where, after a prosperous voyage on an ocean steamer, Raymond and his party arrived in improved health and spirits, and Spencer's house was filled with jubilant voices and joyous hearts.

When Herbert found that Raymond would listen to no remonstrance in favor of sparing Hester the crushing blow that was about to be inflicted upon her, he declined witnessing it, as he very justly said that, as much as he abhorred her duplicity and lack of principle, he could not take part in her punishment, merited though it was, for she had been a good friend to him, even if she had used the means of others to assist him.

On the evening after this conversation took place, Raymond De Lorme, with his wife, Miss Lyman, Clarice, Gibbs the detective, and Zulieme, set out for Oaklands. They went on board the boat after supper, and retired at once to the state-rooms secured for them. At daylight they were landed at the plantation, and found the De Lorme carriage awaiting them. The driver was an old family servant, and to his discretion could be intrusted the secret it was important to keep from the knowledge of every one at Le Bocage.

At a later hour he was sent with a note from Raymond to Hester, informing her that he had detained Clarice to accompany him when he came over the next morning, and requested her to be in readiness to receive him in her own home precisely at eleven o'clock that morning. He would bring with him the priest, and all could be settled finally.

Hester was puzzled by the wording of his note, and she thought it very business-like to be written by a man in love, but she would not permit a doubt to intrude on her mind on that auspicious day. She summoned Sylvia, and ordered her to lay out upon her bed the robes of satin and lace which had been prepared for the occasion, and took from a velvet case a magnificent set of pearls presented to her by Herbert Spencer as a bridal gift, when she was last in New Orleans.

Any other woman would have felt how lonely and deserted she was by female friends, to have not one near her at this crisis in her life; but Hester cared little for that. She felt that she could sustain herself, and she was willing to dispense with Mrs. De Lorme's presence, though she resented the absence of that lady, and the utter neglect with which she had treated her of late.

She triumphed in the thought that she would find means to repay her, and she revelled in the belief that as her husband, Raymond would become so devoted to her that the little influence his mother possessed over him would be utterly set at naught.

When her toilet was completed, she viewed her radiant figure in the cheval glass, and rejoiced in her beauty as her most effective weapon in the warfare she meant to wage with her prospective mother-in-law. No warning fear came to tell her that her sceptre had already departed, and the sword suspended over her head was ready to fall and crush her. Her heart was filled only with exulting visions of love, ambition fulfilled, and triumphs won in the world she was so eager to dazzle by her charms, and subjugate by her subtle intellectual power.

She had ordered the parlors to be closed, and the rooms brilliantly illuminated; and a temporary altar decked with flowers from the conservatory, was placed in the central one.

Hester now swept into that apartment, and glancing around with a satisfied smile, said:

"Right royally will I welcome you, my hero and my love. Had all the world been bidden to our bridal, I could not more carefully have prepared for it. Oh, Raymond! how I love you! how I love you! and yet it seems to me you linger long. No matter; once *mine*, and I shall know how to wind myself so completely into your heart of heart that you will think but of me, care only for me, of all the women in this wide, wide world."

A carriage drove to the door, and Hester made a few steps forward, but she suddenly checked herself, and with a flashing smile, said:

"No, I will not meet him on the threshold; let him enter and be struck with me and my surroundings. There are no strangers to cavil at finding the bride awaiting the lord of her life and heart."

In place of Raymond, Mrs. De Lorme came in with Miss Lyman, followed closely by her two daughters. Hester thought their looks were strangely cold, but she greeted them with cordiality, and remarked with some surprise that not one of them offered to kiss her.

"Where is Ray?" she asked, with a slight tremor in her voice. "I thought he would have been with me before this time?"

"He passed into the conservatory with some friends he has brought with him to witness what is to take place here to-day," replied Mrs. De Lorme with measured intonation, and her words for the first time struck a strange chill to the bold heart of the expectant bride. She mechanically said:

"Any friends of his will be welcome."

"I hope you may find them so," was the sarcastic response.

Hester flashed an inquiring and defiant glance at her, and said:

"Of course I shall find them so. Henceforth Raymond's life and mine are to be identified, and what he estimates highly I will learn to approve; even the mother who has slighted and ill-treated me, I can tolerate for his dear sake."

Mrs. De Lorme drew herself up haughtily, and said:

"I scarcely think I shall trouble you to do that, Hetty Blake. Look! and see if you will welcome those who approach."

Half paralyzed by the sound of her own name uttered in those freezing accents, Hester turned her head in the direction of the conservatory door, to which Mrs. De Lorme now pointed. It had unclosed, and advancing slowly through the opening was a radiant figure dressed in bridal white, with brow, neck and arms decked with costly gems, that flashed in the light of the chandelier. Hester saw before her the being she had believed in her grave, and adorning her lovely person were the gems she had thought lost in the depths of the Ohio. The fair vision leaned on the arm of the man she had lately thought all her own, and behind them came Zulieme to tell the story of her wrongs, and bring home to their author disgrace and defeat in its most humiliating form.

For a moment Hester's senses reeled, and she felt as if she must faint; but she rallied all her effrontery, and like a lioness at bay, stood ready to defend herself, and if it were possible, to rend those who attacked her.

With a wild laugh, she cried out:

"Who is that? And why does she come hither on our bridal day, Raymond De Lorme, to sow dissension between us? Have you robbed the grave to bring my father's discarded daughter hither to dispute my right to *you* and to his fortune?"

Raymond slowly said:

"I have brought my wife to shine down the daring interloper who has attempted to assume her place. She would have spared you this ordeal, and allowed you to go without bringing home to you the bitterness of this degrading scene, but *I* would not have it so. Since circumstances forbid me to punish you in any other way, I determined that you should at least drink to the dregs the cup of humiliation my hand has prepared for you. All your baseness is known to me, Hester Blake, and if you venture to defy me, I have a man in attendance ready to arrest you for conspiring against the life that is most precious to me, and also for making away with the Landry diamonds, and accusing an innocent person of having stolen them."

Hester had grown deathly pale, but with a sneer, she haughtily replied:

"I defy you to prove your assertions, and I shall maintain that I am Estelle Landry. Have me arrested at your peril. I am not a nervous fool to be frightened at your threats. Possession is nine points of the law. I have been recognized as Armand Landry's daughter and heiress, and I am not going to resign my birthright at *your* bidding, Mr. De Lorme. No doubt you 'lay the flattering unction to your' *vanity*, which leads you to believe that I shall break my heart because I have lost *you*; but learn from me the truth, that I only valued you for the worldly advantages you possess. A verdant youth like yourself could have few attractions for a woman gifted with such beauty and intellect as are mine. I should have put my foot upon your neck, had you been true to the pledges you have given me, and made you the humblest of my slaves. As it is, I will prosecute you for bigamy, and contest to the last my right to my father's name and fortune."

Estelle left the arm of Raymond, and advancing a few steps, with an expression of angelic compassion upon her lovely face, laid her hand on that of Hester, and softly said:

"You are my father's daughter, Hester Blake; the same blood flows in our veins, therefore I forgive you all your machinations against myself. I will save you from yourself, if you will permit me to do so. Such threats as you have just uttered are but the ravings of a foiled heart, for you cannot carry them into effect. The mother whose aid you doubtless calculate on, is no more; and your own letters, exposing every step you have taken, are in Raymond's possession. Think what the result of a public investigation must be, and be warned in time."

Hester withdrew her hand from the light touch that rested upon it, and raised it menacingly; but her arm dropped suddenly, as if turned to stone, when the death of her mother was announced. She stood alone now—alone in her desolation and ruin; and the death of her mother had taken from her every chance to maintain the position she would have battled for to the last, if she could have seen the slightest chance of success. She flashed a menacing glance on the imploring face of Estelle, and bitterly said:

"Do not touch me—do not appeal to me in that hypocritical tone, when you are exulting in your heart over the triumph you have won at my expense. I hate you, and I would yet destroy you if I could gain the power to do so. You know the truth, and I will no longer deny my identity. I am Hester Blake—the daughter of the woman your father wronged, and if justice had been done to *her*, the lawful possessor of all he died possessed of. I lay down the name I have borne a few brief months, and with it the yoke that has almost goaded me beyond endurance. My Bohemian nature shall have full sway now, and should you chance to hear of Hester Blake in the future, it will not be as a poor and despised dependent on your bounty, but as a power in the world!"

She swept rapidly from the room, all moving aside to allow her to pass; but Mr. Gibbs, who had stationed himself near the door opening upon the hall, at a sign from Raymond, followed her to the door of her apartment, and as she was entering it, said, in his matter of fact tone:

"I am a detective, Miss Blake, and it is my duty to keep guard over you till I see you safely out of the country. If you will be quiet, and let things take their course, you 'll be allowed to get off easy, because the family don't want to have a scandal made. Pack up your things, and be ready to go with me in two hours, and I will take you to New York as fast as steam can carry us, and put you on an English ship, to go wherever you choose when you are landed on the other side of the ocean. You will have a good income secured to you, and I must say that you have been very liberally dealt with."

Hester paused at this address, and looked the speaker over with an air of superb scorn. She coldly replied:

"Since you look like a gentleman, I am willing to be escorted by you to the place I am most anxious to get to; but beware of hinting to any one on our journey the business that brought you hither, or that I am under your surveillance. I shall have no desire to escape, for the prospect of leaving this detested country is the most agreeable that could be presented to me. I think I can rely on your discretion, sir, as you may on my pledged word to give you no cause of complaint against me while I am under your protection."

Gibbs stood aside, and Hester entered her room, and locked the door.

She had sustained herself proudly and defiantly as long as others were looking on her in her fallen state, but now that she was alone the reaction came. The depths of humiliation opened to receive her, and she grovelled in them for a brief space, feeling like one bereft of all that made life valuable.

Much as she had dared, to possess herself of fortune, it was not the loss of that which touched her most deeply; the bitter consciousness that the man she loved with all the passion of her nature had seen through and circumvented her, was the sting which goaded her almost to madness.

But amid all her anguish she did not forget the costly robes she wore, and after a few moments' indulgence of the rage and despair that struggled for mastery in her bosom, she arose, took off her jewels, and then folded away the glistening satin and lace, wisely thinking that they might yet grace a triumph, if they had witnessed a humiliation on this day.

Her race was not *yet* run nor her career ended by this first defeat. She felt strength gathering in her heart for the conflict with fate that lay before her, and long before the time named by Gibbs as the limit of her stay she had packed up all she desired to take away with her, and was ready to accompany him.

A note was sent in to her from Raymond, forbidding her to remove anything that had belonged to his wife, but granting permission to her to take all that she had purchased for herself since she came to Le Bocage. He went on briefly to explain what would be done for her, and how her income was to be paid, but only on the condition that she should for ever expatriate herself. For the sake of Estelle he had condoned the punishment she richly merited, but the future safety of that beloved one should not be endangered by permitting her to remain in the same country with her.

Hester read the missive with curling lip and flashing eyes; then she tore it into fragments, and scattered them on the floor.

She turned again to the glass, and calmly finished the arrangement of her toilet. She had heard a carriage drive up to the door, and a glance at her watch told her that the hour of departure had arrived.

The voice of Mr. Gibbs summoned her a moment later; a servant came in to take her luggage, and she walked with firm steps through the hall that she was never more to enter.

No one was visible as she passed out, but on the steps was Gumbo, looking as strong and healthy as usual, and near him stood Zulieme to witness the expulsion of the impostor they had been the means of unmasking.

They had been forbidden to speak to her, but the exultation in those two dark faces was harder to bear than all the humiliation that had gone before. Hester clenched her hands, and drew her vail closer, as she muttered:

"Wretches! If I had not been an idiot, I would have bought you up, and easily made you both a party to the deception you have been so eager to proclaim."

The carriage drove away, and Hester Blake, with her vivid beauty, her subtle intellect, and unscrupulous nature, went out into the world to win the name and fortune that should make her famous.

A few years' study made her a finished actress, and she won a European fame under the French name she assumed. In that language were her triumphs won, for her mother had taught her to speak it from infancy, and her accent was so pure that no one suspected her nationality.

Adèle Lamothe became as celebrated for her coquetries, her boundless extravagance, and her caprices, as any of her class, and as long as her beauty lasted, she had no rival in the career she had chosen; while those whose happiness she had so nearly marred became a united and happy family.

THE END.

[MISS CARLOTTA KINGSLEY, the author of the thrilling stories, "The Mystery of No. 27," and "Filippo the Bandit," will commence another story in the next number of the *Ledger*. It is entitled—

THE BROADACRES TRAGEDY;

OR,

THE IRREVOCABLE PROMISE.

It is full of interest, from the opening chapter to the close.—ED. LEDGER.]

GATHERED FERN LEAVES.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

O, Autumn King! on the forest crest
Lay down when thou wilt its crown;
Send off, at point of thy crystal spear,
Gay leaflets to flutter down.
On the hill-tops kindle bright thy fire,
Till the woods like beacons burn,
But spare, O King of the icy spear—
O, spare us the wondrous Fern!

The oak has chanted its forest psalm,
The beech-tree its idyl told;
The maple opened its missal wide,
With its letters red and gold,
Which Frost, like a cunning monk, had writ
In the shine of Autumn days;
The hemlock stands, like a Christian saint,
Unafraid amid the blaze.

We ask not these at thy hands, O King!
But leave with us yet a while
The fair strange scroll of the plumy Fern,
That has come, with tear and smile,
Into childish hands on household hearths,
With a sigh for ills that are
But a hopeful finger pointing up
Through the shade to some bright star.

Like a lance to-day a-tilt at Wrong,
Where a sin in purple creeps;
To-morrow drooped like an angel's wing,
Where a mourning mother weeps.
It points to-day to the gaudy plume
That glitters on Folly's crest;
To-morrow catches a slant sunbeam,
To fling o'er a rifled nest.

* * * * * * * *

By the woodland way, by forest shade,
We shall look to-day in vain;
The drooping Fern has been gathered in,
Out of tempest, cold and rain.
Should we wish it here, where winds are cold,
And the frost lies on the sod,
When a tender hand has laid it up
In leaves of the book of God!

THE LOVERS' QUARREL.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Of all people on earth, Milly loved *one* the best. It was the man she was engaged to. He had come into her lonely life like some wondrous prince in the fairy tale.

In the quiet village in which they met, certain rules regulated social affairs. Courting people were, so to speak, set apart. Parlors were given up to them whole evenings together, ordinary folk sitting in kitchens or on back porches, or anywhere out of the way. Two engaged people belonged to each other. It was treason for one girl to endeavor to monopolize what was generally termed the "steady company" of any other young lady. And Arthur Heathwood was given over to Milly Hunt, as her particular and especial property, from the first day on which he was known to "be particular."

All this suited Milly very well. It suited Arthur also. Everything went on famously. The wedding-day was set. The two lovers existed in a blissful state of romance; and Milly, at least, believed that all this was to last for ever. She, in her simplicity, expected to live altogether alone in the world with her Arthur, and expected that he would be delighted with such a state of things. They were to bill and coo until they were very old indeed, and then die together and be buried in one grave, and go to heaven together hand in hand.

When the experience of womanhood has enlightened us, even if we love, we must say to ourselves, "It is possible he may change. It is even possible that I may. And surely one of us must die and leave the other." But to trust him we love, and Fate and Time and ourselves, with a marvellous and romantic faith, is one of the sweetest parts of first love. It is what makes it so beautiful to look back upon, so different from anything else so marvellous. To feel it, one must love first in those years where womanhood and childhood meet.

"Who is that bowing to you, Arthur?"

"Is some one bowing to me?" said Arthur. "Where?"

He looked in the direction Milly indicated.

"Yes, Miss Lint, I declare. What can bring her here? Excuse me, Milly."

So he left Milly on the little bank under the big elm where they had been sitting, and crossed the road and spoke for five minutes or so with two ladies who were certainly, to judge from their costume, very fashionable ladies indeed. "City ladies, too," said Milly to herself. "I wonder whether I shall get that air after I live there?"

Arthur came back after his talk, and the ladies walked on.

"Mrs. and Miss Lint, Milly," said Arthur. "I used to spend half my evenings at their house. She's a splendid girl, musical, and quite a belle."

"Ah," said Milly coldly. "You never mentioned her before."

"Well, I don't often think of her. Out of sight out of mind, you know."

And Milly suddenly felt very happy again. But the next evening Arthur did not stay with her as usual.

"You see," he said, "I must call on the Lints. They are at the hotel, and expect it."

"Do they know you are engaged?" asked Milly, in a little whisper.

"No; not as yet," said Arthur. "I shall let them guess it. I want to make you acquainted. We'll have some pleasant times together."

Then off went Arthur. He was only performing his social duties, but Milly, country bred, had her fixed opinions about the conduct of an engaged man. "He should not call on other ladies," she declared to herself. But after a sulky hour or two, she comforted herself by saying that "as the Lints did not know about her, they might be excused, and that they would do what was right when they understood how matters really were."

A few days after this, Arthur took Milly to call on the Lints, and the mother and daughter were charmingly polite; and thenceforth were always getting up pleasant parties, and sending for Miss Milly Hunt and Mr. Arthur Heathwood to join them.

At first, Milly liked this well enough; but soon the fact that Arthur did not comport himself on these occasions as a lover should, dawned upon her mind. In her rural circle, the engaged gentlemen sat with their arms about their ladies' waists on all public occasions. They seldom spoke to any one else, and proved their devotion by being rather uncivil to other ladies.

Of course Arthur Heathwood was not likely to do these things, a man used to society, and anxious to keep his footing there. He was constantly thinking how much sweeter and prettier Milly was than Miss Lint ever could have been, and he was proud of her too, for she was a girl whose manners were soft and gentle, and who was graceful, and dressed in pure and simple taste. But he thought she understood what was proper in this new circle, as well as he did, and never guessed that she was hurt and angry and offended, because he handed her out of the boat just as he did Miss Lint, and because he called her Miss Hunt, and said, "Allow me," when he put her shawl on for her.

Men are very stupid in such matters. A word or two would have made all right, but he never uttered them. And Milly at last made up her mind to show him how she felt; to put a stop to all this, or end everything between them.

There was a certain little blue boat on hire at the river side; a pretty thing, bright with paint, and with a lady's face smirking upon the back board over the name "Flora." This Arthur had engaged for the season, and nearly every morning he rowed the ladies out. Often Mrs. Lint would not go, and then the two girls sat side by side in the boat, Milly's golden hair and soft blonde complexion contrasting well with Miss Lint's brunette beauty. Milly's face was too round and soft to show her feelings much, and Miss Lint chattered so volubly that she could not have said anything had she desired to do so. And Arthur, delighting in the pleasant exercise, believed that they were all enjoying themselves capitally.

How could he guess that the talkative belle was jealous of his little betrothed, who had captured the handsomest man of their set—one of whom she had thought a great deal too much, considering how matters had ended—or that Milly was growing angrier at the way in which other people were occupying the time and attention of *her* Arthur?

It burst upon him, as far as Milly was concerned, one bright morning, when, with his face all aglow, he leant over the gate, and called to her:

"Milly, the boat is ready."

"Is it?" said Milly.

"Yes, dear; come."

Milly put down her sewing, and walked toward the gate. No one else was near. She folded her arms and leant against the palings, and felt something rise in her throat which she had to gulp down before she could speak.

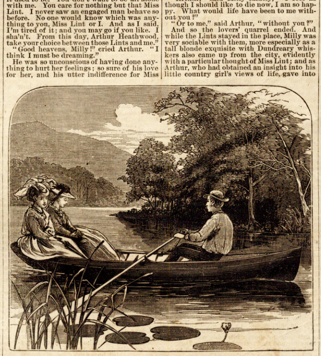
"I'm not coming, Arthur," she said, at last.

"Why, Milly? You are well, I hope?"

"Well enough," said she. "But I'm tired of it all. Everything is different from what it used to be. You don't want to be all alone with me. You care for nothing but that Miss Lint. I never saw an engaged man behave so before. No one would know which was anything to you, Miss Lint or I. And as I said, I'm tired of it; and you may go if you like. I sha'n't. From this day, Arthur Heathwood, take your choice between those Lints and me."

"Good heavens, Milly!" cried Arthur. "I think I must be dreaming."

He was so unconscious of having done anything to hurt her feelings; so sure of his love for her, and his utter indifference for Miss Lint; so shocked and surprised, that she must have forgiven him, could she have read his heart; but she did not. She looked away from him out over the buckwheat field, and said no more just then.



"I thought you were enjoying yourself so much," said he. "I thought you had quite taken to Fanny Lint."

"You were mistaken," said Milly; "and I've said what I mean."

"And you will not go with me?"

"No."

"Well, then," said Arthur, "I must go alone. The ladies are ready on the hotel piazza, and I can't disappoint them."

"On no account," said Milly.

"So, good-bye, Milly," said Arthur.

Milly said nothing in reply; but when he had walked slowly away some little distance, she called him back.

"Mr. Heathwood."

He ran back.

"I might as well tell you," said Milly, "that I prefer you should not call again. You'll have more time for Miss Lint."

"Milly!"

"Well, sir."

"I thought you loved me."

"Perhaps I did once. I don't now."

"Milly, you can't mean that."

"I do, sir. I absolutely hate you."

He gave her one look, and went without another word. And she walked back into the house, and up into her own room, where she almost cried her eyes out, but where she packed up his ring, a lock of his hair, one or two little presents, and put them in an envelope addressed to "Mr. Arthur Heathwood."

When he should have returned from boating with Miss Lint, these should be handed to him. He should see that she could resent slight properly.

She waited until the lunch hour at the hotel had come. Then, knowing that the Lints would never miss that meal, she called a little boy, and confided the packet to his care, instructing him to deliver it into Mr. Heathwood's own hands.

Then, very, very miserable, she sat upon the porch watching for his return; wondering whether Arthur would say or write anything.

After a long delay, she saw the little dusky figure on the road. It came on rapidly, a strange thing for black Tom. It had a something white in its hand. An answer. Her hair, and little pin-cushion, and watchguard, in another packet, perhaps. Then it was all over indeed.

Tom came up and stood before her, his eyes rolling in his head. He stretched the package toward her. It was the one she had sent.

"Couldn't give it to dat gempleman, no how," said he.

"Why not?"

Tom looked at her askance.

"No body couldn't give him nuffin."

"Eh! what do you mean?"

"Dat dar little blue boat, Miss Milly, what you all sails in sometimes—"

"Yes. Go on."

"Well, dem ladies was goin' out in it, long of him. But dey didn't; staid to hum; and he went alone. And he's drownded, Miss—drownded dead, and dey's fotch him up out ob de riber. And de boat's upside down, and a hole in de bottom. And— Oh, Lor'! Ole Missy, hurry."

And Aunt Jenkins hurried out just in time to catch Milly's fainting form in her arms.

A messenger of more responsibility than Tom was sent to the hotel at once. There was no doubt about the matter. The little blue boat had been found among the rapids, and a little while after, the body also had been found. Miss Lint was in hysterics, and Mrs. Lint almost distracted. And the awful thing that had been brought dripping into the house, lay in an empty room, under a white sheet.

And this, Milly said to herself, was the end of her cruel jealousy. He had never been anything but kind and tender. She had done all the wrong. Oh, if she could but die!

All the long, bitter, maddening afternoon she lay with her head in her aunt's lap. She even told the old lady of her remorse, and the good soul tried to soothe her by telling her that "courting people always tiffed a little." But nothing could or ever would give her any peace, Milly thought. And she sobbed until, utterly exhausted, she dropped asleep. Then she began to dream—dreadful dreams about little blue boats, in which they sailed together, Arthur and herself. And she grew angry at him, and pushed him into the river; or he fell, and she could not save him.

"Oh, my God, have mercy on me!" cried Milly, starting out of her sleep at last. It is too horrible! horrible! I've murdered him!"

"Milly!" said a voice, "Milly!" And some one who was weeping softly knelt down by her couch.

"Milly, you do love me a little then?"

She looked up, and gave a scream. Her first thought was that this was a spirit; but stout flesh-and-blood arms encircled her, and two living lips pressed her forehead, her cheek, her chin, her quivering mouth.

"My darling!" said Arthur. "I am safe and well. I never went out in the boat. The ladies declined to go. Mrs. Lint fell suddenly ill, and her daughter would not leave her; and poor Collins was there on the shore, and I loaned the boat to him and went off into the woods by myself. At the hotel they thought the body found was mine. It is awfully beaten and bruised. And the poor fellow was just my height, and they took me for a ghost when I came back, unconscious of all that had happened. Oh, Milly, my darling! I almost wished myself in that poor fellow's place until your good old aunt met me at the door, and told me all you had said to her."

"Arthur," said Milly faintly, "I feel as though I should like to die now, I am so happy. What would life have been to me without you?"

"Or to me," said Arthur, "without you?"

And so the lovers' quarrel ended. And while the Lints stayed in the place, Milly was very sociable with them, more especially as a tall blonde exquisite with Dundreary whiskers also came up from the city, evidently with a particular thought of Miss Lint; and as Arthur, who had obtained an insight into his little country girl's views of life, gave into them a little, even while he taught her those of more polished society.

In the end indeed, they were so sociable, those two girls, that Milly told Fanny that she would have asked her to be bride's-maid, but that her cousin would be offended if she were not asked; and Fanny replied that she would have liked it so much, only by that time she should be married herself, and a married lady, as every one knows, cannot be bride's-maid.

SCIENCE.

An evening paper of this city prints the following: "In the frequent allusions to the freaks and frolics of lightning, we see every now and then mention made of a ball of fire which is spoken of as the thunderbolt. For instance, we are told of the striking of lightning near Hartland, Me., in these terms: 'The bolt appeared in the shape of a ball of fire, about the size of a cannon ball, and plunged into a goose pond, which it rendered almost completely dry.' Now this 'all-dreaded thunder stone' is simply a myth, and we can hardly understand how simple folk can insist on seeing it." We know nothing about the particular story referred to, but the writer is quite incorrect in denying that lightning ever assumes the form of a ball of fire. Globe lightning is a well-known meteorological phenomenon, concerning which Mr. R. A. Proctor has written a paper that he might study with advantage.

Arsenic as a prophylactic—that is, preventive—remedy for hydrophobia, has been tried in Switzerland with surprising success. Dr. Ernest Guisan, in a dissertation lately presented to the medical faculty of Berne, says that thirteen persons in the various towns of the canton of Freiburg were bitten by a rabid dog, between the 7th and 9th of June. They were recommended to take one-twentieth of a grain of arsenic each, morning and evening, as a prophylactic measure. Eight of them followed this advice, and were not attacked by the disease. Of the remaining five, three died and two remained unaffected. The last to die was a woman who began the arsenical treatment, but soon discontinued it. According to Dr. Guisan, the arsenic should be applied to the wound, as well as taken internally.

Medical treatment of stammering, by galvanism and rhythmical motion of the affected muscles, has been attempted by Dr. G. V. Poore, assistant physician to Charing Cross hospital. He writes in the *Practitioner* concerning it as follows: "My experience has been too slight as yet to draw any conclusions as to the advantages of such a treatment for stammering, and one great reason for this has been that every stammerer can speak very well, if he will only take the trouble. Even the very worst cases that I have encountered can recite prose or poetry if they will do so slowly, and at the same time alter either the pitch or rhythm of the voice, and it is therefore difficult to determine whether or no a weak galvanic current is of any use."

The protection of buildings against injury by lightning is a subject of almost universal interest. We make the following extract from a paper read before the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia lately, by Mr. Davis Brooks. He said, "I do not say that a greater proportion of buildings *having* lightning rods are destroyed or injured than of those not having them, although those making careful observations do give that as a result of their statistics. I shall undertake to show that this difficulty consists in the defective connection of those plates with the earth; and also that with proper connection with the earth, they are almost, if not an absolute means of protection."

A system of weather observations and reports, similar to our own signal service, is to be established in Denmark. The project includes not only a series of stations in the kingdom of Denmark itself, but also ten meteorological observatories, completely fitted up, in the Faroe islands, Iceland and Greenland, from which monthly weather reports will be issued. Half of the latter will probably be ready to begin work next winter. It is hoped that this service may ultimately be connected with that of our own country, by means of a northern telegraph cable.

Sir William Thomson proposes to substitute steel wire for the hempen line now employed in making deep-sea soundings. The kind recommended is pianoforte wire of 22 gauge. It is not so heavy as the hemp, can be worked more rapidly, and does not, like the latter, require two or three hundred weight of iron to sink it. The steel can be preserved from rust by the application of powdered lime, or by working the drum, from which it is paid out, in oil.

Specimens of the volcanic dust ejected from Etna and Vesuvius respectively have been compared and found to correspond with each other in physical and chemical properties. They consisted essentially of two minerals—quartzite and magnetite. No trace of the metal titanium could be detected. Mr. Gladstone, who examined the sample from Vesuvius, found it at Ischia, twenty-five miles from the mountain.

An entirely new species of rhinoceros has been added to the collection of the Zoological Society, London, during the present year. It has a semi-tuberculated skin, and makes a sound like a cow.

An apparatus for automatically recording the rolling of a ship in a seaway, and the slopes of the waves, has been invented by Mr. W. Froude, F. R. S.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

PROMETHEUS (Detroit, Mich.) says: "I have read the *Ledger* ever since my boyhood, and I am now considerably past thirty. I have always regarded its advice as excellent, but I earnestly desire light in regard to some of its teachings. When I was about twenty-five, I became engaged to a lady a little younger than myself, and received the consent of her parents. Her relatives were proud of me, for I had a profession, and faultless habits. Two years later, her father forbade the marriage, because I refused to spend every dollar I had for a splendid wedding. When I remonstrated, he said we were young, and had plenty of time to make up our loss. He was wealthy, but said he would not give us anything. The lady disregarded her father's command, and left her home, never to return, but intended to go with me, more than a thousand miles away, to settle down, as was at first agreed upon by all. But having always seen your advice, 'never to marry against the wishes of parents,' I abandoned the young lady forever, thinking I could in time forget her. But each year only increases my intolerable anguish at her loss, and life is becoming a burden. The charms of other young ladies only bring up the sad memories of the lost one. Now, will you please to answer the following questions: 1st. What can I do to rid myself of this great mental suffering? 2d. Why should children who have obtained their majority, be in subjection to parents who have given them nothing? 3d. Why do you invariably lay down the rule, 'never to marry against the wishes of parents,' in opposition to the law of the land, and to the teachings of nearly all other writers, who always make merry over a runaway match? 4th. What principle of morality or public policy is subserved by utterly destroying the hopes and happiness of two young lives, simply to gratify the whim of an old and unreasonable parent who stands with one foot in the grave?" The *Ledger* never gave an advice against *your* marrying this lady, in the circumstances you describe. We repeat the general principle that the consent of parents is desirable, and only in extreme cases is it permanently withheld from reasonably prudent unions; and possibly, had you and this lady exercised a little prudence and patience, you might have had it in the end. Now, in reply to your questions: 1st. If the lady is still free, marry her. If not, do your present duties to the best of your ability. 2d. We do not know any children—with surviving parents—such as your second question describes. There are many years in our lives when we have nothing but what parents give us. 3d. We do not "invariably lay down, etc." We give counsel suited as far as we know to each case. Did you consult the *Ledger*, and state the fact that the young lady had left her father's house for you? If "other writers make merry" over runaway matches, they make mischief. 4th. None whatever, if we are sure the facts are as you put them. But who is to decide? Is not the ardent youth or the tender maiden just as likely to be in error as the old parent? People are often wiser than ever before, when "one foot is in the grave." For every case of two *sensible persons* robbed of happiness by regard to parents, we shall find two of rash, hasty, imprudent, miserable marriages, against the wish of parents.

UNDECIDED says: "Having been a reader of your paper for many years, I now come to you for the first time for advice. My case is as follows: I am a young man, twenty-six years of age, six feet high, and am a mechanic, and make good wages. Six years ago I left my native village and came out West. When I was at home I kept company with a young lady, and loved her dearly, and I think she loved me. Since I came here I have become acquainted with another young lady, and I love her as much as I loved the other one, and I think she also loves me. When I am with lady No. 2, I love her the best, for she is lovely; but when I am alone and think of the other one, I feel that I love her the best. Now, Mr. Editor, please tell me what I ought to do. I cannot marry both, and I cannot lose time to go and see lady No. 1; and I fear sometimes that she is changed, and perhaps is not as beautiful as she was when I last saw her, six years ago; and if that were the case I would probably back out. Please answer this in your next issue, and oblige one who is not selfish, but who wants to do right." We enjoin you with an authority from which there is no appeal to go and see No. 1 before you commit yourself to No. 2; and then decide, and decide promptly, for it is unfair and unjust to the young ladies in those parts to have a young fellow of twenty-six, six feet high, and making good wages too, "lying around loose."

JUNO (Portland) writes: "I wish you would give me a little advice on a subject which troubles me much. A gentleman and lady of my acquaintance are engaged to be married. She is making all the usual preparations, and it is understood between them that he will come at any time she says to marry her. But he tells me and others that he has become tired of her, and does not intend to marry her, and by and by, he says, will tell her so. He now writes her, professing to love her as well as ever, and willing to marry as soon as she says. She thinks he will do so. They have both been very free to talk with me about their engagement, and plans for the future. Now please tell me if I, as her friend, ought to tell her how he is deceiving her, or shall I leave her to find him out herself? I shall anxiously await an answer in the *Ledger*, of which I am a constant reader." This is villainous conduct on the part of the man—if man he can be called; but we never knew anybody to get thanked for meddling in other peoples' business, and you would probably be no exception to the rule. Leave him to make known his own purposes, and to extricate himself from the dishonorable dilemma in which he has placed himself.

HESTER (Hyde Park) says: "I come to you, as hundreds of others have done, for information, and trust that I shall meet with as ready a response as they have—not in love affairs, as I unfortunately have not any on hand. Instead, I beg you will inform me whether the advantages offered in Europe for the study of elocution are better than in America; in what part of Europe such advantages are to be found, and whether there is much difference in the prices, in comparison with those in this country. In the event of my wishing to apply for further particulars than you are able to give, will you kindly furnish me with the address of any party of whom I may obtain any further knowledge. I shall look forward eagerly and impatiently for your next issue, especially in the direction of that unpretending column where so many find knowledge, comfort and advice." You can get as good instruction in elocution in the United States as can be obtained anywhere in the world. We of course refer to English elocution. If you want to acquire elocution in a foreign language, you could probably do better abroad.

WILL. McD. (Philadelphia) says: "I notice in your answers to correspondents, issue of October 12, 1872, you remark, in reference to 'Bible Scholar's' (Talbot county, Md.) question, 'We are sorry to be obliged to disagree with,' etc. This has caused some argument. I say a party cannot disagree *with* another unless he *agrees* against a third party, and hold that the correct grammatical expression is, 'We are sorry to be obliged to disagree *from* his opinions.' If I am wrong, my teaching at school has been greatly at fault, and I would look upon it as a favor to be set right. If I am right, you will, I am sure, say so, through your esteemed notices." We are sorry to be obliged to disagree with your teachers, or, if you like it better, to differ from them. We refer them to Webster, who says of the word, "usually followed by *with*, sometimes by *to*, rarely by *from*." Atterbury—an English classic—says, "They reject the plainest sense of Scripture, because it seems to disagree with what they call reason." Your amendment sounds as awkwardly to us as if we heard your teacher say that his dinner had *disagreed from him*.

W. S. W. (Connecticut) writes: "I love a certain young man very much, and I am pretty sure that he loves me; but he is so bashful that I know he never will ask me to have him. There is also a young man in the town of ——— that comes to see me, and I am told that if I refuse him it will make him crazy. Do you think that I ought to marry him? He would make a kind husband, and I like him very well. Do you think that I am old enough to marry, being but nineteen? My mother likes both gentlemen; my father is dead." You are old enough to marry, although you do not seem to be old enough to determine whom to marry. Say to the bashful young man that you know he is your disinterested friend, and you wish to consult him as to the expediency of marrying your suitor from ———, emphasizing the circumstance which you mention, that it will make him crazy if you don't have him. Ask him if he doesn't think any man a fool to be made crazy by your not having him? Write us what he says, and we may then advise you further.

FRED. (New Orleans) says: "Being a constant reader of your most valuable paper, and noting your answers in the correspondence column, I seek advice in the following query: I am in love with a young lady about twenty or twenty-one years old, and I know she will make the best kind of a wife. I am about one year her senior, and a clerk working for a salary of $1,200 a year. Now if we get married, can we live comfortably on so small an income?" Whether you two can get on or not it is impossible for us—with the slight acquaintance with you we have the pleasure of enjoying—to say; but this we do know, that many good medical men, eloquent and useful clergymen, rising lawyers, and able editors with wives and several little children respectively, do get on very well on this income. Of course they hope, as you may fairly hope, that it will increase. Begin with moderate ideas; find your greatest enjoyments at home, and keep up the courtship through all the years, and there is nothing to fear.

CONSTANT READER (Montgomery, Ala.) says: "A few days ago, a friend of mine and myself, as we were taking a walk, chanced to pass a couple of young ladies with whom we were unacquainted. As I passed, I saluted the ladies by lifting my hat. My friend tells me it is improper and impolite to salute young ladies with whom you are unacquainted. After considerable discussion we concluded to leave it to you whether it is improper or impolite to lift your hat to ladies with whom you are unacquainted." In France a gentleman entering a store where there are ladies raises his hat, and there may arise circumstances where it is proper for a gentleman to raise his hat to a lady whom he does not know; but this is exceptional. A lady must first recognize a gentleman before he has a right to raise his hat to her, or in any other way affect acquaintance with her.

W. J. G. says he is in love with a young lady, and notwithstanding he fell in love with her three months ago—and he tells it as something astonishing—he loves her still! He wishes to know whether he had better propose? Let him consult the young lady about it, and be governed by her opinion.

H. S. (Oil City) says: "Is it proper for a young lady to present one of her photographs to a gentleman friend, when she is in possession of one of his?" Certainly, if he is a relative, or if it is a pledge that the original is to be given also. The photograph then is "not lost, but gone before."

E. A. M. asks: "What is the proper time to call on a lady, or does it vary with different communities?" It is not only different in different localities, but in different families in the same neighborhood. Some receive one evening; some another. Consult custom in both respects.

L'ESPOIR says: "In my anxiety and doubt, I have come, like many others, to the oracle, hoping to receive a portion of the wisdom and instruction so generously conferred upon the sorrowful and ignorant. I have but one question with which to tax your patience, and in order to present it, my case is stated as follows: I am a young girl, sixteen years of age, and I have no mother, but I have a friend whose advice and friendship I value very highly, and would not lose willingly, could I keep them in any manner. About three months ago we were so unfortunate as to have a slight difference, since which he has not visited me. A short time ago we happened to meet at a sociable, and I acknowledged to him that I had been in the wrong. He accepted my apology, and expressed his desire to 'make up,' and continue his visits here as usual; but he made one condition which I can hardly persuade myself is either just or necessary. We are not, and never expect to be more than friends, and yet he says that unless I promise to kiss him on his first call, he will still continue to withhold his friendship from me. Now, dear Mr. Editor, what I wish to ask is this: Did there ever appear to you to be any harm in a kiss? You will, no doubt, think me and this question alike silly, but I am certain that your opinion on the subject would be highly interesting to a great many." We think this gentleman's course rather ungentlemanly, if he is near your own age; and rather unwise if he is much beyond it, as he is not in the character of a lover. There is no harm in a kiss, among relatives, or between those who are engaged to be married, or in certain circumstances, as where there is obvious disparity of age, or on a bride's wedding-day; but the kissing of young persons indicates a degree of familiarity, and a lack of self-respect on the part of a lady which no good mother would desire to see in her daughter; and young ladies who offend against propriety in this matter, we presume do so generally, out of the view of those with whom they wish to stand well.

CONSTANT READER (Philadelphia) says: "Have the kindness to answer through the columns of your valuable paper the following questions: 1. For the last six months or more I have had a most painful dread of death, so much so that I am incapable of doing anything. I find no pleasure in anything, go nowhere, read nothing. I am but twenty-two, and have many opportunities of getting along in the world if I could only get rid of the very troublesome thoughts. I cannot study or go anywhere, finding no pleasure in it, and wondering and thinking what is the use of studying, or in fact doing anything, when perhaps, just as you finish your studies or obtain a competency, you die. I sometimes wish to make a name for myself in the world, but this thought always prevents me from doing anything but mope about, and find no happiness in anything. What shall I do? 2. Is there an English translation of 'René,' a French novel? 3. What effect has absinthe on the system? Does it act the same as opium?" 1. Consult an experienced medical man, and ascertain from him if in his judgment you are in good health. If you are, then consult some clergyman who will feel an interest in you; and if you have no access to such an one, consult your Bible, which at the best the clergyman can only explain to you. You have got hold of *a half truth*; you need the other half. 2. We do not know any translation, nor indeed the book. You do not now need such books. 3. Absinthe is a preparation of brandy flavored with wormwood—of which the classic name is *absinthium*. Its effects are much more deadly than those of brandy. Do not try it.

ANXIOUS FRIEND (Mississippi) writes: "I have a young lady friend who some time ago engaged herself to a gentleman. Since then she finds she does not love him, and will be miserable if she marries him. Still she feels that she is bound to keep her promise to him, and thinks it would be wrong to break the engagement. At the same time she is praying that something may happen to prevent the marriage. She is well educated and cultivated. Her friends argue with her that she will at the altar perjure herself before God if she swears to love and cherish the man while she does not love him. Her answer is, 'I cannot think it right.' The man to whom she is engaged knows she does not love him. She treats him unkindly; still he clings to her. Can you not bring some argument that we can use to convince her of the terrible wrong she will commit by insisting on keeping her engagement?" To perjure is to take a false oath. A bride does not *swear* to love her husband; she only *promises*—although in a very solemn manner. Therefore, as you will perceive, the lady will not "perjure herself," while she may promise what she cannot perform. We do not approve of marriages without mutual love; and while we respect this young lady for her conscientiousness in adhering to an engagement once made, we consider the man very unwise to insist upon its fulfillment against her inclinations.

ONE WHO APPRECIATES (Ohio) says: "I have been an attentive reader of your valuable *Ledger* for nearly three years, and I now for the first time submit a question for your decision. I am about nineteen years of age, and intend next spring to try my fortune in life. Now my father says he 'll give me my choice of learning a trade or business, but thinks I could do the best in the former. I have no preference only in a financial point of view. I would like to know at which occupation you think I would be most likely of finding steady and profitable employment. Also, do you think that after taking a 'commercial course' my penmanship would be passable for a book-keeper? Please answer in the Notices to Correspondents column." Your hand promises to be very good for book-keeping, after a commercial course. A carpenter, for example, is sure of work as a general rule, and may become a builder. So in many other trades. Your tastes, aptitudes and circumstances must determine your choice, and of these only yourself can be the judge.

THREE SCHOLARS ask: "Who was the first European that walked upon American soil? As we are all young students, and have devoted some hard work to find this out, without success, we would be very much obliged to you if you would favor us with this one answer, as this is the first time we have asked from you any such favor." This is one of those questions which can never be settled with absolute certainty. Some authorities maintain that Columbus was the first European who ever set foot on American soil; while others argue, that as he never visited the continent of America, he never, in fact, set foot on American soil at all. And then it is also maintained that Labrador and some of the coast now comprised within the limits of New England were visited by Europeans several hundred years before Columbus made his discoveries. So you see that this is a question which is not easily determined.

A LITTLE GIRL says: "Will you please tell me why the members of the Episcopal Church always kneel when they enter their pews? Is it merely an act of reverence, or do they repeat any particular prayer? Please do answer my question, and oblige." We presume the devout worshippers who, kneeling or otherwise, take the attitude of prayer on entering a place of worship, offer a brief petition for a right state of mind, and a blessing on the service. This is not confined to Episcopalians; nor do they all kneel. Many in all churches decline this act, and have some reason for it in the fact that the church is for *public* worship, and that private prayer is to be in the closet, and if offered in public is liable to some appearance of ostentation, such as the Lord rebuked in Matt. 6: 5. The matter is of little moment. "Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind."

ART STUDENT says: "I come to you for advice, like many others. I am a young lady nineteen years old, and an art student. Have been painting portraits for the last four years in a western city, and nearly always gave satisfaction; but gave up a good business for the purpose of perfecting myself in my profession. Am now in New York, studying, and in the spring am going to Paris. What I want to know is, had I better learn French here, or wait till I get to Europe and try and pick it up? It is costing me a great deal to study, and I can hardly afford to 'take lessons.' Do you think I could learn it from books called 'French without a Teacher?'" Get books and do the best you can with grammar and the meaning of words. When you go to Paris, what you have done yourself will help you in learning colloquially.

QUERY (Troy, N. Y.) says: "Will you please answer in the correspondents' department of the New York *Ledger* this letter? I am a young man desirous of purchasing an engagement ring for the lady to whom I am engaged, but am ignorant of the value and qualities of the different stones. I cannot afford to purchase a ring that will cost more than $35, which will of course exclude a diamond, and am desirous of getting a stone that will be both durable and handsome." Your wisest course is to select a respectable jeweller—if you are known to him all the better—and tell him just what you want, and you will get the only advice that will be of practical value to you. Respectable merchants, living and established in a place, have no inducement to mislead you in a thing of this kind.

J. D. B. (Baltimore) writes: "Last spring I presented a lady with a ring, with hers and my initials in it. Some time after, we got angry. It was my fault. I waited for her to send the ring, but she did not; consequently I sent for it, and received it. Did I do right in sending for it? Now I meet her every day, and we do not speak. Do you think it is necessary for me to apologize to her? She is not only angry with me herself, but she must get all the other girls angry with me also." If you are in fault, as you say you are, of course you ought to apologize. As to asking the return of presents, it is very common, but we confess we could never see any sense in asking a thing back which has once been given away.

VILLEROY says: "I am a constant and admiring reader of your paper, and have often thought I would write and ask some question, for I have always been very much interested in the answers to correspondents. Do you consider it improper for a man to marry a woman over two years his senior, supposing both to have arrived at the years of discretion, and knowing that they love each other well enough to live happily together?" Not at all. Let the gentleman try to keep a couple of years ahead of the lady in mental furniture and in force of character, and he will be the head to a good wife in reality as well as in name.

A CLERK (Brooklyn) says: "In making out false bills for my employer, do I become a party to his fraud, or am I justified by the precept in the Bible which says, 'Servants, obey your masters?' I find that if I refuse, it will be at the expense of my situation, which enables me to support myself and my father's family." The Bible injunction to which you refer does not mean that a servant shall commit any act which his conscience tells him is wrong, even if he is commanded to. Sooner cut off your right hand than do such a thing.

WILL. SYPHEN (Des Moines, Iowa) says: "Excuse me for troubling you, but I would like to know if Continental currency of 1778 is redeemable, and if so, at what place?" We think its value will be greater to the antiquarian than to any one else. Without more specific description, we cannot give more specific answer, but our impression is against its being redeemable.

I. B. wishes to know whether bank-note engraving is a good trade, and whether he can get apprenticed to it. It is a good trade; but as to becoming apprenticed, he must inquire at some establishment where the business is carried on to find out about that.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*